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New York

Chairman: Mr. González . . . . (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects; introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Palihakkara (Sri Lanka): My delegation has the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.22, on the subject of prevention of an arms race in outer space, on behalf of the following sponsors: Algeria, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Sudan and Sri Lanka.

I do not wish to elaborate at great length on the topicality and importance of the subject. Many delegations have already done that in the general debate. They have urged multilateral work on this critical issue, which is also on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as an item deserving priority consideration.

Here I wish to place on record my delegation's gratitude to the co-initiator of this draft resolution, the delegation of Egypt, for their cooperation, support and valuable advice in carrying out consultations and formulating the text.

This year's draft resolution has broad-based support. We consider this cross-regional support a measure of the importance the international community attaches to the question and to actualizing the will of all member States to do multilateral work on this issue.

I will not attempt to give an extensive description of the substance of the preamble and the operative parts of the draft. Suffice it to mention here that the substance of the text, while closely following the provisions of resolution 53/76, adopted last year, is an update that was drafted in a careful manner based on wide-ranging consultations that my delegation and our Egyptian colleagues have undertaken with the other sponsors and other interested delegations.

The draft resolution as a whole is formulated in a forward looking manner, not in a retrospective sense. Our main objective is to reaffirm principles that enjoy general support and to make provision for some meaningful work next year in the Conference on Disarmament, where there appear to be prospects for developing a consensus to establish a subsidiary body to undertake some meaningful multilateral work. We hope that the draft resolution with its present wording will enable all delegations to participate in that consensus.

We commend the draft resolution for adoption by the Committee.

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.18. I do so on behalf of Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland,

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Samoa, San Marino, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The purpose of this draft resolution is simple and transparent: to reinvigorate the way in which we approach the nuclear disarmament agenda. Its intention is to galvanize the international community in a concerted push to move forward in realistic and achievable steps, so that we can work to eradicate nuclear weapons once and for all. We see it as the duty and obligation of all members of the United Nations to address this crucial imperative.

The draft resolution outlines the contours for moving forward. It does not presume to supplant other draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament before this Committee. Rather, its purpose is to offer a comprehensive way forward, contingent on an unequivocal undertaking to speed up the pace of engagement.

This draft resolution addresses the task before us in the round. It is not discriminatory in approach, as has been claimed. It calls for steps to be taken appropriately by the five nuclear-weapon States that possess the largest arsenals. It calls upon the nuclear-capable States that are not parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to renounce the nuclear-weapons option and adhere to the non-proliferation regime unconditionally and without delay. It also calls upon the non-nuclear-weapon States to take a considerable number of steps.

This draft resolution, therefore, offers an all-inclusive approach. Its goal is to engage the international community as a whole in underpinning the steps along the way that we all, collectively, need to take in the fulfilment of our obligations and responsibilities. And, importantly, it addresses the considerable inventory of unfinished business in disarmament. In this context, it is both inclusive and comprehensive.

The draft resolution focuses on the need to use existing mechanisms and approaches. It provides a balance between bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral approaches, each of which, undeniably, must be pursued to achieve nuclear disarmament. It does not attempt to multilateralize the ongoing bilateral process, but it recognizes that as this process evolves further others will need to engage along the way.

The new agenda co-sponsors believe that the approach set out in this draft resolution offers a decisive way to proceed, if we are to achieve the consensus of eliminating these weapons.

An overriding concern we have in putting forward this draft resolution is the reality that the nuclear disarmament process is faltering, if not stalled. We believe that what it needs is a kick start. The perceived benefits and the promise that came with the end of the cold war seem to have eluded us. As a consequence, we are not delivering as fast as we could or should be on nuclear disarmament.

The nuclear tests in South Asia and subsequent talk of developing a nuclear deterrent have changed the nuclear architecture. Our draft resolution addresses this development, along with the need for universal adherence to the NPT. Concepts of nuclear deterrence are being expanded, or at least becoming more ambiguous. The retention of nuclear weapons is being re-rationalized for potential use against biological and chemical weapons attack. There are other challenges being pursued in missile proliferation and missile defence.

Complacency has crept into the nuclear agenda. The political agenda, more often than not, has followed rather than led public expectations on disarmament. But we sense that complacency may have permeated civil society thinking as well as the political process itself.

It is this sense of real concern and frustration that has driven the new agenda process. It is an approach that is underwritten by the provisions of the NPT and, in particular, its basic bargain to forgo the nuclear-weapons option in return for the undertaking to work for the elimination of these weapons, provisions that we take very seriously.

The NPT carries an explicit obligation to pursue the elimination of these weapons, and it calls for the cooperation of all States in the attainment of this objective. It follows, then, that non-nuclear-weapon States have both the right and the responsibility to pursue this obligation.

When the NPT was extended indefinitely in 1995, the indefinite retention of nuclear weapons was not sanctioned. On the contrary, the NPT makes another important distinction — progress on nuclear disarmament is not contingent on progress on conventional disarmament. Finally, it is inherent in a Treaty based on mutual obligations that no one group of States can determine independently the pace at which the obligations of that Treaty are implemented.

Those are the legal imperatives before us. Let me now touch on the political imperatives of the new agenda draft resolution.

The United States and the Russian Federation reject categorically any multilateralization of the START process. We do not dispute that, nor is this initiative calling for multilateralization of this important initiative. We welcome and endorse it, but we do see the process evolving into plurilateral engagement, and in turn eventually becoming multilateral and universal.

Our draft resolution is balanced in another important respect. It acknowledges and welcomes disarmament that is already being pursued by some nuclear-weapon States. Most important in this context is the trilateral initiative between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United States and the Russian Federation. We hope this initiative can be broadened and expanded in the future. We also acknowledge unilateral measures, such as those of the United Kingdom and France.

But let us remind ourselves also of another political reality. Nuclear weapons must not, in the new millennium, become an inevitable feature of our society. The fact that they have not been used for 50 years does not mean that the risks they carry are lessened. The longer we retain them, the greater the temptation for others to acquire them. Increasingly, nuclear weapons will become an even greater liability as inventories age and exceed their design life. What happens then? Are we already seeing a new race for technology replacement? Let us be clear on one thing — nuclear weapons are multilateral in their reach and their devastation, whether we like it or not.

The pernicious capacity of the current inventory of nuclear weapons is beyond comprehension. It seems to us that, as others have pointed out, we have weapons chasing targets rather than targets requiring weapons. It is not new agenda thinking to engage in a debate over what might or might not be lower levels at which a deterrent might be maintained in the future. Our goal, which is consistent with our international obligations, is to work determinedly for their elimination altogether: no more, no less.

In taking the new agenda forward, we have been conscious that for too long it has been all too easy to dismiss calls for action as premature, unrealistic, counter-productive or impossible to achieve. We had the classic situation in which the perfect became the enemy of the good. We have also heard that there is no need for a new agenda. We regard this as disingenuous talk. The only agreed agenda that we know of that has currency consists of the elements set down in the NPT's principles and objectives. Our resolution incorporates and endorses that agenda.

The new agenda approach is qualitatively different, however. It calls for implementation of some practical measures that can be taken now and others that can be taken in the future. It advocates a step-by-step, progressive approach. It argues for mutually reinforcing steps. It does not attempt to put down deadlines. It confirms the call made in this Committee last week that disarmament is best achieved through practical, discrete, incremental steps.

The calls that this draft resolution makes are, we believe, realistic and achievable. We are seeking, therefore, to move the debate along a measured path, where the requisite confidence, productive engagement and outcomes can be delivered. It may not be a comfortable scenario for action — disarmament rarely is for those who possess the weapons.

Finally, allow me to highlight some of the changes we have made to this year's draft resolution. First, the text has been updated to take into account developments over the past year. Secondly, a number of refinements have been made to the preambular and operative paragraphs, taking into account constructive dialogue we have had in the last year with those countries keen to engage with us on substance.

This draft resolution — explicitly and deliberately — does not question the commitments to article VI of the NPT. It seeks only to accelerate the process leading to the fulfilment of these obligations. This is a very important distinction. The new agenda also endorses the need for the full implementation of the decisions and the resolution that came from the 1995 NPT Review Conference. In addition, this year's text endorses and welcomes the disarmament measures that are being taken, in addition to the START process. It also reinforces the Joint Statement by the United States and Russian Governments on the strategic importance of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and it records the reality that all articles of the NPT are binding, as appropriate, on States parties at all times — an important imperative in addressing accountability.

Central to the new agenda approach — and it is articulated again this year in a new formulation — is a determination that we need an "unequivocal undertaking" to speed up the process leading to elimination, and we are seeking to have this undertaking articulated at the highest political levels.

We urge all delegations to consider this draft resolution carefully and to join us in supporting it this year. We ask that delegations assess it for what it says, rather than for what it does not. The sponsors have always been ready to engage in dialogue on the substance of the text.

We do not claim that this is a novel or exhaustive agenda, for it is not. I want to make it clear also that it is not a hidden agenda, nor is it intended to be confrontational. We would be relaxed if some delegations wanted to call it a "renewed" agenda. More important, however, it encapsulates the elements that we consider should be part of a new push to move us forward towards eliminating nuclear weapons for all time. At a time when the process is stumbling, if not stalled altogether, it would be irresponsible if we failed to lift our game.

We have been told in this Committee that there is one road forward, and that we cannot bypass key milestones. We agree entirely with that view. Recent events reinforce the need for all of us to stay on the road and make sure that we are all travelling on the same road. But in making any journey, we must be clear about the objectives, how we are to get there and what is the best route. The new agenda does just that.

Mr. Guani (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Uruguay, on behalf of the countries of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated countries, Bolivia and Chile, wishes to take this opportunity to stress the importance that we attach to adopting appropriate measures to regulate the international maritime transport of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuels, in accordance with the highest international safety standards. This matter has particular reference to agenda item 76 (e), "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes".

Our interest stems from concern about the dangers to the health of the inhabitants, and to the marine environment, of the coastal and island States through whose region the wastes and spent fuel are transported.

We wish to reiterate the concept of the Joint Declaration made by the Foreign Ministers of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay on 17 January 1997, which was circulated as an official document of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

We recognize that under the norms of international law and national legislation coastal States have jurisdiction over the protection and preservation of the marine environment in their exclusive economic zones, in order to prevent, reduce and monitor pollution. We support the strengthening, within the framework of the competent international bodies, of the regulation of the transport of radioactive material. This should include: guarantees of non-pollution of the marine environment; exchange of information on selected routes; a duty to inform coastal States of contingency plans for shipwrecks; and a commitment to recover radioactive wastes in the event of accidents aboard the ships transporting them and to pay compensation for loss and damage.

We particularly welcome the action taken by the Director General and Secretariat of the IAEA, under resolution GC(42)RES/13, approved at the forty-second session of the General Conference. This took the form not only of initiatives to promote closer cooperation between international organizations concerned with the safe transport of radioactive materials, but also of concrete acts, such as offering assistance to member States to strengthen their national regulations by applying the transport regulations, and, at the request of any member State, appraising the application of those regulations; establishing a Transport Safety Appraisal Service, which has already received a request from a member State; organizing training courses on the transport of radioactive materials, in the framework of five model regional projects for improving the protection infrastructure; and starting a programme of work on the possibility of simplifying and streamlining the transport regulations.

The most recent resolution on the matter, resolution GC(43)/RES/11, adopted by the forty-third General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, recognized these initiatives, particularly the value of the Transport Safety Appraisal Service in obtaining the highest possible levels of safety in the transport of radioactive materials, and, in preambular paragraph f, recalled the invitation in resolution GC(42)/RES/13 to States shipping such materials to

> "provide, as appropriate, assurances to potentially affected States upon their request that their national regulations take into account the Agency's Transport Regulations and to provide them with relevant

> information relating to shipments of radioactive materials."

Motivated by the need to protect the health and safety or our population and our environment, we believe that these efforts should continue, thus promoting the adoption of mechanisms that will provide sufficient guarantees to all the States concerned that the strictest safety measures will be applied in the international maritime transport of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, and that any damage resulting from accidents in connection with such operations will be made good.

In this context, we wish to stress article 6, paragraph 4, regarding prior notification to and consent from the transit States, of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, as well as the International Maritime Organization Code governing the maritime transportation of nuclear fuel.

We would also like to place special emphasis on the language of the consensus in this year's report (A/54/42) of the Disarmament Commission, which, with respect to the "Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned", states in paragraph 17:

> "Nuclear-weapon-free zones may also serve to promote cooperation aimed at ensuring that the regions concerned remain free of environmental pollution from radioactive wastes and other radioactive substances and, as appropriate, enforcing internationally agreed standards regulating international transportation of these substances."

We believe that the progress achieved will be mutually beneficial for coastal and island States as well as for States involved in the international maritime transportation of radioactive material, since it will allow for the establishment of coordination and the necessary precautions with regard to possible accidents. We are convinced that any progress will be appreciated by the international community when it comes to preventing such accidents.

Mr. Coutts (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We associate ourselves with what the representative of Uruguay has just said on behalf of MERCOSUR, but we would like to refer to certain aspects of his statement because of the special importance we attach to the international maritime transportation of radioactive wastes and the prohibition on dumping such wastes. Chile, with its long coastline, archipelagos and important straits, is concerned because of the dangers such transportation poses to the health and marine environment of coastal and island transit States.

For this reason we have referred to this concern whenever possible and in all relevant forums, including the First Committee, since this matter affects international security. We will continue doing so, because we are convinced that it is necessary to keep the international community aware, in order to maintain progress in strengthening safety measures.

We believe that it is important to consider carefully the concern of island States, expressed in the general debate by the Dominican Republic, and by Jamaica, speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The island States rely on agriculture, fishing and tourism, and therefore to a high degree on their fragile ecosystems.

For the island States, whether in the Caribbean or the Pacific, the international maritime transportation of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuels is a real security threat, all the more serious because most of those potentially affected are small countries lacking the resources to cope with a crisis of such magnitude, caused by big countries and by technologies that those small countries do not control. Faced with the renewed growth of such transportation in 1999, the island countries have expressed their concern in various statements signed by the Governments of the Caribbean region and issued by the recent Pacific islands summit of the South Pacific Forum.

In conclusion, we continue to support the strengthening and implementation of the highest international standards governing the transportation of these materials, emphasizing in particular the need to exchange information in advance, in a timely manner, on the routes selected, contingency plans, recovery of waste and payment of compensation in the event of damage.

Mrs. Arce de Jeannet (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for the Mexican delegation to make this statement on behalf of the sponsors in introducing draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.23, entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty".

The preambular part indicates the dates of the adoption and signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the date when the Preparatory Commission for the CTBT Organization was established; refers to decision 53/422, adopted during the fifty-third session; notes the number of States that have ratified the Treaty, with emphasis on those whose signature and ratification are needed for its entry into force; and welcomes the convening of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in Vienna, Austria, from 6 to 8 October 1999.

By the operative part, the General Assembly would endorse the Final Declaration of the Conference: call upon all States to continue to support the Treaty; welcome the contributions States have made to ensure that the verification regime will be capable of meeting the Treaty requirements; and urge States to maintain their moratoriums on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions.

The sponsors hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Seibert (Germany): Since I am taking the floor for the first time at this session, I should like to express my deep satisfaction at seeing you, Mr. Chairman, at the helm of the First Committee. Please be assured of the full cooperation and support of my delegation. It is gratifying to work with you in the Bureau as you conduct your important duties.

I have the honour to introduce on behalf of 50 sponsors draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.27, entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures". I take this opportunity to thank all the sponsors. Their growing number is encouraging and will, hopefully, translate into broader participation in the annual reporting.

The draft resolution has been developed in a joint effort by the delegations of Romania and Germany. I should like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the delegation of Romania for its close and effective cooperation, which has become a good tradition.

While most concepts on transparency in military matters have been developed and implemented in a regional context, progress on the global level has been modest, and much remains to be done by the international community. Two global transparency measures have been adopted by United Nations Member States: the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations standardized reporting system on military expenditures.

While the Register reflects national data on arms exports and imports within seven specified categories of conventional weapons, the standardized reporting system on military expenditures gives a more general overview of national defence policies, in particular with respect to national spending on personnel, procurement, operating costs, research and development. My delegation wishes to underline the importance of universal adherence to both instruments, and appeals to all Member States to provide reports annually to the Secretary-General.

Germany remains committed to promoting transparency and confidence-building in both the global and the regional contexts. We are grateful to the delegation of the Netherlands for submitting a draft resolution on transparency in armaments, contained in document A/C.1/54/L.39, which particularly deals with the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Germany has co-sponsored that draft resolution, and would welcome broad support by Member States.

Let me now turn to the draft resolution before us. The United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures is a significant contribution to international confidence-building in the field of military matters. We are aware, however, that the full potential of confidence-building can be developed only in conjunction with further political steps that require the steady, persistent and sometimes painstaking effort of the international community.

The United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures is an important contribution to this objective. It fully takes into account the different political conditions in each region. It has been acknowledged by all Member States several times, through the repeated adoption without a vote of previous resolutions under the same title.

These resolutions are recalled in the first and second preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution. In the third and fifth preambular paragraphs the draft resolution notes and welcomes the decision by many Member States to participate in the annual reporting. Regrettably, however, the participation by only 35 States last year continues to be disappointing, even if this is an increase over the previous year.

It was for this reason that resolution 52/32 called upon Member States to provide the Secretary-General with their views on ways and means to strengthen and broaden participation in the reporting system, including necessary changes to its content and structure. It also requested the Secretary-General to resume consultations with the relevant international bodies with a view to increased participation, and to submit a report to the General Assembly on the outcome of these consultations, including appropriate recommendations.

The draft resolution takes up this request made by the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, and refers to the Secretary-General's reports, A/53/218 and A/54/298, and the recommendations contained therein.

By operative paragraphs 2 and 3 the General Assembly would welcome the continuation of consultations by the Secretary-General with relevant international bodies and express its appreciation for the submission of the aforementioned Secretary-General's reports, which contain, *inter alia*, practical recommendations on ways and means to enhance participation in the standardized reporting system — that is, to organize international and regional symposia and training seminars in the coming biennium, and to encourage, *inter alia*, the United Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in Asia and the Pacific and in Latin America and the Caribbean to assist Member States in their regions in enhancing their knowledge of the standardized reporting system.

It is these recommendations that operative paragraphs 4, 5, 6 and 7 seek to implement. Operative paragraph 4 not only repeats the traditional call upon Member States to report annually, by 30 April, their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available; it also gives more flexibility as to the reporting format, taking into account that many States report their military expenditures regularly to other international bodies or regional organizations. To facilitate reporting, operative paragraph 4, therefore, suggests that Member States might also use, as appropriate, other formats developed in conjunction with similar reporting in other international or regional contexts.

Operative paragraph 5 in turn encourages relevant international bodies and regional organizations to promote transparency of military expenditures and to enhance complementarity among reporting systems, while recognizing the different conditions prevailing in every single region, and to consider the possibility of an exchange of information with the United Nations.

Operative paragraph 6 requires the Secretary-General to assist Member States in the annual reporting by administrative measures which are also used with regard to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, such as sending an annual note verbale together with appropriate technical instructions, and by promoting international and regional symposia and training seminars.

Operative paragraph 7 requests the Secretary-General to continue consultations with relevant international bodies, with a view to ascertaining the requirements for adjusting the present instruments to encourage wider participation. The emphasis is on examining possibilities to enhance complementarity among different reporting systems and to exchange related information.

Operative paragraph 8 requests the Secretary-General to submit the report to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, with further recommendations based on the outcome of these recommendations and taking into the account the views of Member States, thus coming back to the biannual treatment of this complex topic in the General Assembly and providing sufficient time for action.

Since this approach depends to a large extent on the cooperation of Member States, paragraph 9 again calls upon Member States to provide the Secretary-General at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly with their views on ways and means to strengthen and broaden participation, including necessary changes to the content and structure of the reporting system.

It must be our common goal to prevent this valuable instrument of confidence-building, which has always been unanimously agreed upon by the community of Member States, from being undermined through neglect, and thereby also to protect the credibility of General Assembly resolutions. Therefore, the operative part of the draft resolution stresses the need for further action and makes concrete suggestions.

Let me finally express our sincere hope that the community of member States will be able to adopt this draft resolution by consensus, as it has done in the case of similar draft resolutions in previous years.

Mr. Gorita (Romania): As I am taking the floor for the first time at this session, I would like to express our satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, in the chair of the Committee. You can be assured of the full support of my delegation in your work.

As in previous years, I have asked for the floor in order to address the issue of transparency in armaments, and more particularly on this occasion draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.27, entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures", so ably introduced by the representative of Germany, Ambassador Günther Seibert, to whom we express our deep gratitude.

The issue of transparency in armaments is for Romania a small but necessary part of global confidence-building measures. We believe that increasing transparency in the military field could lead to greater confidence among States, in particular those belonging to the same region. Recent experience in different regions, including South-Eastern Europe, has underlined, in our view, that confidence remains essential to, and is an important requirement for, the maintenance of regional and international peace and stability.

Transparency also has an important role to play in preventing and reducing the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of armaments, an issue widely recognized as having a negative impact on emerging crises. Strengthening confidence-building activities through a better flow of objective military information could help to relieve regional and international tensions and prevent misunderstanding and miscalculations that might lead to irreversible confrontation.

This is why Romania thanks the delegation of the Netherlands for reintroducing the draft resolution on transparency in armaments, contained in document A/C.1/54/L.39, which deals particularly with the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. As in previous years, Romania has co-sponsored that draft resolution, and we appeal for the broadest possible support.

Let me now turn to the draft resolution on transparency of military expenditures. My country reaffirms its firm conviction that the United Nations standardized reporting system is an important instrument in reducing tensions regionally and world-wide. Increased transparency in the area of military budgets and openness in military affairs will enhance confidence among States, thereby providing an opportunity to reduce the risk of military confrontation.

Regrettably, although this measure of transparency and confidence-building has been in place for many years, only a small number of countries have provided information to be included in the reporting system. This is why we attach great importance to the call in operative paragraph 4 on all Member States of the United Nations to report annually, by 30 April, to the Secretary-General their military expenditures for the last fiscal year for which data are available.

As the reporting system is an effective tool for promoting peace, we believe that participation in it should be expanded. Taking into account the views expressed by different countries, the draft resolution now offers more flexibility as to the reporting format and supports enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and different international bodies and regional organizations which have developed similar instruments.

At the same time, Romania welcomes the resumption of consultations, initiated by the Secretary-General, aimed at ascertaining the requirements for adjusting the present reporting instrument with a view to enhancing the participation of Member States. We are grateful for the practical proposals presented by the Secretary-General, including the organization of international and regional symposia and training seminars in the coming biennium and encouraging the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in Asia and the Pacific, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, to assist Member States in their region to enhance knowledge of the standardized reporting system. This seems to be valuable and could receive enough support to be implemented.

Finally, I would like to thank the German delegation for excellent cooperation in this matter and all the sponsors of the draft resolution for their support. My delegation joins Ambassador Seibert's appeal that this draft resolution be adopted by consensus, as similar draft resolutions have been in previous years.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): I wish to speak in support of the draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), in document A/C.1/54/L.23, introduced by the representative of Mexico. As one of the co-sponsors, my delegation, it goes without saying, allies itself with previous statements on the matter.

Let me take this opportunity to emphasize the importance that my country attaches to the early signature and ratification of the CTBT by all States as well as the cessation of nuclear tests pending its entry into force.

This position was exemplified earlier by our country's role as the Chair of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, held in Vienna. We welcome the adoption of the Final Declaration and would like to emphasize the importance of sustaining the momentum generated by the Conference.

In accordance with the 1995 principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, the international community successfully completed the negotiations on the CTBT in 1996. Now our immediate task is to realize its entry into force as soon as possible, together with the early conclusion of fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) negotiations. It is all the more important since the NPT Review Conference will be held next year.

Last week the United States Senate made a negative decision with regard to the CTBT. The Government of Japan deeply regrets this action. We are also seriously concerned that this decision might send the wrong message to the world on the nuclear non-proliferation regime in general, and the significance of the Treaty in particular.

That is why our Government immediately after the Senate's action sent the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Washington to urge the highest levels of the United States Government and key congressional personalities to continue their efforts to bring about the early ratification of the Treaty, despite that setback. In addition, in a recent letter the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan called upon the Foreign Ministers of a number of States to accelerate the CTBT ratification process. On the other hand, we are encouraged by the position of the United States Government in continuing their efforts to secure ratification. My delegation welcomes the statement of the United States delegation to that effect.

The delay of ratification in one State, although regrettable, should not be used as a pretext to postpone the ratification process in others. The courage to take the lead in the right direction is strongly called for and will be deeply appreciated.

As there is a consensus of the global community on the need for a universal and total ban on nuclear testing, my delegation hopes that this draft resolution on the CTBT will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Ogunbanwo (Nigeria): In the general debate in this Committee my delegation spoke about the need for the international community to agree on a new forward-looking agenda, suitable for the post-cold-war era and the new millennium.

My delegation would now like to clarify further what we mean by a new agenda. It must be comprehensive, not selective, and have two broad elements: renewed items and new items. By "renewed items", we mean items that relate to the long list of unresolved issues originating in the present millennium to be carried over to the new one. With regard to the new items on the new agenda, it is pertinent to point out that disarmament is not a static subject; it is constantly evolving and changing, because of new technologies or other developments. Our task is to identify which fall into this category.

If there are problems with the choice of the words "new agenda", my delegation has no difficulty in calling it the "future agenda". Whatever we call it, it cannot be based on complacency or an attitude of business as usual. As we prepare for the new millennium, there are new challenges to be faced and new roles to be assumed, which require an agenda with a new focus. In addition to the future agenda, our methods of dealing with disarmament and international security need to be reviewed if we are to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

As we begin to consider the future agenda, let us jointly set ourselves precise and realistic goals, bearing in mind that progress in disarmament, however modest or incremental, is still good for disarmament.

The question now is how best to achieve our future agenda goals. The answer lies in how we determine priorities and who determines those priorities. While we all have our national concerns and priorities, the best way forward is to look beyond national priorities and to consider priorities that take into account our collective interests.

We have opportunities for taking action. One such opportunity is the decision to be taken by this Committee regarding the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD IV). SSOD IV could set universal goals and principles. We think that there is agreement on the notion of convening such a special session. What is required is for all States to display the spirit of cooperation, the flexibility and the political will needed to break the impasse reported to us by the Disarmament Commission. My delegation expects this Committee to resolve the issue.

Another opportunity will be the Millennium Summit, which is scheduled to open on 6 September 2000. Disarmament will be among the principal themes to be addressed in the report that the Secretary-General will be preparing for that Summit. Against the background of frustration and disappointment over the faltering pace of bilateral and multilateral disarmament, as well as the depressingly long list of unresolved disarmament issues, it is our hope that the Millennium Summit will come up with important and forward-looking pronouncements on disarmament, which has a very crucial role to play in our struggle for a peaceful world — the paramount goal of mankind.

The final First Committee session of this millennium could also generate useful ideas from which the Millennium Summit could benefit. My delegation is pleased to note that civil society has been given the opportunity to make its own input, through the civil society Millennium Forum, to be held from 22 to 26 May 2000.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): The delegation of Egypt has the honour to introduce, on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.8, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". In order to accommodate the concerns of many interested delegations, the draft was subject to intensive consultations, which led to its submission as it now appears. It is based on the draft resolution that the General Assembly adopted last year under the same agenda item.

Once again the draft resolution takes into account the prevailing realities in the Middle East region. These realities underline a basic fact in the Middle East: Israel remains the only State in the region that has not acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which is precisely what the seventh preambular paragraph objectively states. We are not engaging in name-calling, nor are we singling out anyone; we are simply making a statement of reality, expressed in a carefully measured and descriptive manner. We have used neutral language, stating an undeniable fact. Therefore, it is in no way subjective, no matter how hard Israel may try to argue otherwise.

As we stated in the general debate before this Committee, only one country in the Middle East is widely suspected of possessing a significant arsenal of nuclear weapons. Only one country in the Middle East operates unsafeguarded nuclear installations. Only one country in the Middle East refuses to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or even to discuss the nuclear issue. Only one country in the Middle East refuses International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) full-scope safeguards.

Nonetheless, the reaction of the international community to this dangerous and provocative situation, with Israel at its root, remains — compared with other examples, though much less significant — mitigated and muted at best.

The achievement of universal adherence to the NPT remains a cardinal priority, not only for the Middle East region, but also for the international community as a whole. Universality consolidates the edifice of the NPT regime. This has been underscored by the Treaty itself and subsequently confirmed by the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament adopted on 11 May 1995 by the Conference of States parties to the NPT, as well as in the provisions of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the Conference by consensus. It is for these reasons that we regard Israel's refusal to accede to the NPT as impeding the realization of the objective of attaining universal adherence to the Treaty.

Needless to say, the continuation of such an imbalance and asymmetry between the legal obligations and commitments of the States of the Middle East cannot but further aggravate serious security concerns over the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and undermine the efforts of various regional and extra-regional parties to establish confidence-building measures, in particular those efforts aimed at the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Regional parties that have renounced the nuclear option and acceded to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States are questioning the effect of that accession on their own national security. Has our accession, they ask, increased our security, especially when a nuclear threat continues to emanate from Israel? Arab States have delivered on and honoured their promises. Since 1995 all have acceded, leaving Israel as the only State that refuses to do so. It has not even declared an intention to do so. Moreover, it continues to refuse to place all its unsafeguarded nuclear materials and facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards, as the draft resolution reflects.

A few years ago, as a token of our support for the collective efforts, the title of this item was changed from "Israeli nuclear armaments" to "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". This change highlighted the conceptual change from confrontation to reconciliation and towards confidence-building. It is now Israel's turn to make a positive gesture by joining all States of the region in acceding to the NPT, the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime.

Egypt, on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States, hopes to receive the overwhelming support of member States for this draft resolution. Last year there were an unprecedented 158 votes in favour in direct support of our endeavours. This support came from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and elsewhere. We hope that this year's draft resolution will receive even more support. The consolidation of the non-proliferation regime is a solemn duty and sacred responsibility, which we should all work to achieve, without any exception or doubtful standards.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): I have asked for the floor today for two purposes.

First, I will address draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1, "Preservation of and compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty", sponsored by the Russian Federation, Belarus and China. Secondly, I will provide clarification on United States intentions vis-à-vis its own traditional draft resolutions.

I particularly want to take this opportunity to respond to the 21 October statement by the Deputy Representative of the Russian Federation regarding draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1. Many members of the Committee already know that the United States is deeply concerned by the draft resolution and the rationale offered to support it. There are certainly parts of the Russian Deputy Representative's statement with which the United States agrees. For example, the United States firmly believes that the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty remains a cornerstone of strategic stability and that it continues to provide the essential foundation for achieving further reductions in strategic offensive arms. Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin have repeatedly reaffirmed their commitment to the ABM Treaty and to continued efforts to strengthen it.

However, my Government takes strong exception to the Deputy Representative's statement that the draft resolution:

> "follows the mainstream of agreements between the Presidents of Russia and the United States, reached in Cologne in June 1999". (*A/C.1/PV.13*)

In our view, the draft resolution is inconsistent with the commitments made by Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin in Cologne.

The Russian Deputy Representative stated that the Cologne Joint Statement does not contain any agreement to review the ABM Treaty. He then went on to quote the language of the Joint Statement, which says:

> "both Parties affirm their existing obligations under Article XIII of the ABM Treaty to consider possible changes in the strategic situation that have a bearing on the ABM Treaty and, as appropriate, possible proposals for further increasing the viability of the Treaty." (*ibid.*)

What does this obligation in the ABM Treaty mean if it is not a commitment by the parties to review the Treaty in light of changes in the strategic situation?

The Cologne Joint Statement goes on to note that

> "Discussions on START III and the ABM Treaty will begin later this summer."

These discussions have in fact already begun. Several meetings with our Russian counterparts have already been held on START III and the ABM Treaty. In fact, after delivering his speech to the First Committee last Wednesday, 20 October, Under-Secretary of State (Designate) John Holum departed New York to travel to Moscow to continue discussions on the ABM Treaty and START III.

Finally, I take strong exception to the characterizations in the Deputy Representative's statement that the United States is seeking to "undermine" or "liquidate" the Treaty, or that any changes to its provisions "would deprive the Treaty of any sense."

Let me make it clear that the United States has not made a decision to deploy a limited national missile defence; such a decision will not be made until the year 2000 or later. In any case, we do not believe that the deployment of a limited national missile defence system would change the basic strategic calculus underlying the ABM Treaty or be incompatible with its central purpose, which is to maintain strategic stability and enable further reductions in strategic offensive arms.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1 appears to be based on the premise that adapting the ABM Treaty to meet the emerging threat posed by long-range ballistic missiles under development and testing by certain States necessarily means destroying the Treaty. Further, this also ignores the strong view of the United States that the adaptation we envisage would not threaten the stability of mutual United States-Russian deterrence.

In our ongoing discussions with Russia, there are shared common views, including the need for further reductions in offensive forces beyond START I and START II; the need for stability in our strategic relationship; and the need to preserve the ABM Treaty, which provides stability and opens the way to further reductions.

We have made it clear to the Russian side that we want to work cooperatively on the issue of missile defence and the ABM Treaty as we also continue our discussions on START III. We believe our bilateral efforts are the only way to achieve success.

As I have noted, the process of discussion is well under way, and is continuing. The draft resolution on the ABM Treaty, however, seeks to prejudge this process and would undercut it. This is not in the interest of the United States, nor of Russia, nor of the world community, nor of anyone who wishes to see real progress on nuclear disarmament. The United States recognizes that the international community has an interest in the progress of bilateral arms control. At the same time, we do not believe it is appropriate for the General Assembly to be placed in the position of having to take sides in ongoing bilateral negotiations, or that the General Assembly can or should make judgements about specific substantive negotiating issues in such negotiations. Consequently, we continue to strongly urge Russia, Belarus and China to refrain from proceeding with their draft.

It is also with regret that I wish to inform the First Committee that the United States has decided not to pursue its two traditional draft resolutions, one on compliance with arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and one on bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament. Both, in our view, address important and relevant issues; both, in our view, would have been particularly timely this year. However, it appears that these two draft resolutions ran the risk of being subjected to a campaign of amendment designed to introduce contention over the ABM Treaty in every possible context. These draft resolutions have important points to make, and deserve better than to be treated in this way. As a result, the United States will not pursue them this year.

On compliance, we have submitted instead a draft decision, in document A/C.1/54/L.13, to keep the issue on the agenda, and we hope that the traditional consensus enjoyed by the compliance draft resolution will apply to the compliance draft decision.

Ms. Rovirosa (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico has pleasure in introducing, on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.24, under agenda item 82, "Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco).

The priority that the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean give to strengthening the regime prohibiting nuclear weapons established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco is confirmed by the large number of co-sponsors that are States parties to the Treaty and by two events in the past year: the ratification by the Government of Colombia and the ratification by the Government of Costa Rica of the amendments to the Treaty. The draft resolution contains a new preambular paragraph noting their ratification.

By the operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would welcome steps taken by some countries of the region for the consolidation of the regime of military denuclearization established by the Treaty, and urge those countries of the region that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification of the amendments to the Treaty approved by the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) in 1990, 1991 and 1992.

We hope that the draft resolution, supported by the signatory States of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, will, as similar draft resolutions have in previous years, receive the broadest possible support in the First Committee and be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Antonov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At this year's session we see a continuation of the discussion initiated by the Russian Federation of an important and topical issue — the problem of information security. Recently this question has become even more relevant as a result of the qualitative new stage of the scientific and technological revolution, with a vertiginous rise in the introduction of new information technologies and means of telecommunication.

At the fifty-third session Russia for the first time took the initiative of introducing a draft resolution about developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. That draft resolution won general support. It is our belief that we are dealing with a fundamentally new situation which is arising in the world today.

Mankind is entering a qualitatively new phase of its development. The formation of a global information space, which is transforming information into a precious strategic resource, unquestionably opens up broad horizons for increasing the creative potential of mankind and presents favourable circumstances and conditions for the harmonious development of world civilization.

At the same time, the information revolution and progress in information technology entail a certain threat of the use of information advances for purposes inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international peace and stability, compliance with the principles of the non-use of force, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and respect for human rights and freedoms.

We believe this danger requires the adoption of preventive measures. There is now the threat of the appearance of a new area of possible confrontation in the international arena, which may provoke new forms of the arms race on the basis of the advances in the scientific and technological revolution, and ultimately divert tremendous amounts of resources which are so necessary for the purposes of peace and development in creative work.

On the other hand, the unprecedented level of information and the vulnerability of its infrastructure pose a real danger because of possible terrorist and criminal activities, which may well have extremely serious consequences.

The justification for this approach was demonstrated in particular in the course of interesting and useful discussions held within the framework of an event organized jointly by the United Nations Department for Disarmament and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in Geneva — an international meeting of experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. All the apprehensions about the matter lead us to the conclusion that the problem of international information security is now likely to become the subject of a careful and objective discussion within the framework of the United Nations.

Our new draft resolution, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.4, which I am now introducing, confirms the topicality and significance of the problem of information security and calls for the further promotion at multilateral levels of the consideration of existing and potential threats in this field. The draft resolution is exclusively non-confrontational and covers the interests of a broad range of States. It notes the considerable progress in developing and applying the latest information technologies and their effect on the further development of civilization.

The operative part of the draft resolution contains an invitation to all States to continue to inform the Secretary-General of their views and assessments on a general appreciation of the issues of information security, defining basic notions related to information security and the advisability of developing international legal principles that would enhance the security of global information and telecommunications systems and help to combat information terrorism and criminality.

We think that this broad approach to the question will make it possible for all States to give consideration to all aspects of the problem as it exists at present. We believe that our proposed draft resolution should be adopted by consensus, as was last year's.

The meeting rose at 11.35 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/54/PV.17

General Assembly
Fifty-fourth Session
Official Records

First Committee

17th Meeting

Wednesday, 27 October 1999, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. González . . . . (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 *(continued)*

Thematic discussion on item subjects; introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Seibert (Germany): I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the sponsors, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.20, on agenda item 76 (j), "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures". The draft resolution is so far sponsored by 72 Member States – those listed in the document plus Israel, Brazil and Hungary.

We attach particular importance to the fact that the co-sponsorship once again bridges the usual regional group lines and involves Member States from virtually all regions of the globe; it has steadily increased from 42 in 1996 to over 70 this year. I should like to express special thanks to all the sponsors.

The draft resolution "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures" was first introduced in 1996, when our delegation submitted what became resolution 51/45 N, which was adopted by the General Assembly without a vote and was later included in the deliberations of the Disarmament Commission.

As reiterated in the second preambular paragraph, the basic idea is to focus the First Committee's attention, in a more integrated manner, on the relevance of certain practical disarmament measures for the consolidation of peace in post-conflict environments. As experience has shown, such measures as arms control, particularly with regard to small arms and light weapons, confidence-building, demobilization, reintegration of former combatants, demining and conversion, are often prerequisites to maintaining and consolidating peace and security and thus providing a basis for effective rehabilitation and socio-economic development in areas that have suffered from conflict. The scope of resolution 51/45 N remains unchanged in the new draft.

The importance of practical disarmament measures has received growing recognition from the international community in many respects. "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures" remains an important item on the United Nations agenda.

The past 12 months have been particularly encouraging for this German initiative. Security Council meetings were dedicated to post-conflict peace-building, in December 1998, and to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in peace-keeping environments, in July 1992.

Two important documents have been issued since last year: the final report (A/54/258) of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms, in August 1999, and the guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, with particular emphasis on consolidation of peace, adopted by the Disarmament Commission in April 1999, to be found in document A/54/42, annex III.

Let me also mention the increasing activities by the Group of Interested States. Since its establishment on 4

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

March 1998 — as a response to the Secretary-General's wish for such a group to facilitate effective implementation of practical disarmament measures – the Group has held eight meetings and supported a variety of projects, particularly in Cameroon, Guatemala and Albania, and, hopefully, soon it will support projects in Bolivia, the Niger, Guinea-Bissau and Papua New Guinea.

In doing so, the Group has tried to strengthen international cooperation in the field of peace consolidation, especially as undertaken by affected States themselves. The Group has already become, in close cooperation with the Department for Disarmament Affairs, a focal point where delegations can meet to exchange information about their various activities in the field of practical disarmament for the benefit of others and for the sake of better coordination. Maybe most important, the Group tries to directly assist affected countries in their practical disarmament efforts by jointly sponsoring those projects.

This year's draft in large part follows the wording of previous years. Let me therefore focus on highlighting the changes to last year's text.

At the centre of this year's draft resolution is the intention to keep up the momentum and build upon the progress achieved so far. We want to encourage the Group's work, and therefore, in operative paragraph 4, welcome the activities of the Group of Interested States and invite it to continue its work.

The fifth preambular paragraph notes the important contribution of the Secretary-General's report prepared with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms.

Operative paragraph 1 welcomes the adoption by consensus of the Disarmament Commission's guidelines on conventional arms control/limitation and disarmament, and operative paragraph 2 stresses their particular relevance in the context of our draft resolution.

With these basic explanatory remarks, I put the draft resolution before the Committee. Extensive consultations with the sponsors, but also with other delegations, were conducted prior to the submission of the draft, in an effort to again secure consensus on this draft resolution. In keeping with tradition, I trust that the draft will again be adopted without a vote. We invite all delegations to join a consensus on this draft resolution.

Mr. Nene (South Africa): As this is my first opportunity to speak, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship and to assure you of my delegation's support and cooperation.

It is a pleasure for my delegation to introduce five draft resolutions and one draft decision on behalf of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement. These draft resolutions and the draft decision will be considered under agenda items 69, 76, 77 and 84.

First, I would like to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace", circulated in document A/C.1/54/L.45. The draft resolution calls for the participation of all permanent members of the Security Council and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, as this would facilitate the dialogue to advance peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region.

Since a similar draft resolution was last adopted at the fifty-second session, the heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries have reaffirmed the validity of the objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace and the importance of international cooperation to ensure peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region, calling for greater efforts and more time to facilitate discussions on practical measures to ensure conditions of peace, security and stability in the region. In this regard, the Non-Aligned Movement heads of State and Government called on the Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean to continue his informal consultations on the Committee's future work. To this end, the draft resolution calls for the continuation of these consultations. The Non-Aligned Movement States expect that this draft resolution will again be supported by a large majority of Member States.

The fundamental objective of the draft resolution entitled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.46, is to ensure compliance with relevant environmental norms when negotiating and implementing treaties and agreements related to disarmament.

The international community has long been aware of the detrimental consequences of uncontrolled radioactive sources and the risks associated with military activities involving nuclear materials. The dismantling of certain categories of weapons requires techniques and methods that would sustain and augment the prevailing environmental standards.

While the draft resolution refrains from making any reference to specific disarmament agreements, it nonetheless calls upon States to take fully into account relevant environmental norms while negotiating arms control and disarmament treaties and agreements. It also calls for the application of advances made in science and technology in enhancing security and in facilitating disarmament without adverse impact on the environment or to its effective contribution to attaining sustainable development. We remain hopeful that the draft resolution will be adopted by the Committee with the widest possible support.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.47, entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development", underlines the importance of reallocating valuable resources released as a result of disarmament for development purposes and thereby reducing the gap between developed and developing countries. In the view of the non-aligned countries, this relationship has gained momentum and has indeed become relevant against the backdrop of the diversion of a large proportion of financial, material and technological resources to armaments, placing a heavy burden on the economies of many countries, especially the developing ones. The stark contrast between expenditure for armaments and the paucity of aid for socio-economic progress is also self-evident.

The draft resolution acknowledges the actions taken in the context of the Final Document adopted by the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and invites Member States to communicate their views and proposals for the implementation of the action programme adopted by that Conference. The Secretary-General is further requested to continue to take action for the implementation of that programme and to submit a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. We hope that this draft resolution will again be adopted without a vote.

As delegations may be aware, at its fifty-third session the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution 53/77 AA, entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament". Despite the fact that at its 1999 session the Disarmament Commission could not reach consensus on the objectives and agenda for a fourth special session devoted to disarmament (SSOD IV), members of the Non-Aligned Movement and other members of the international community continue to work towards the convening of that fourth special session. For that reason, the Non-Aligned Movement Foreign Ministers, during the recent Non-Aligned Movement ministerial meeting held in New York, reiterated the Movement's support for the convening of SSOD IV.

As in the past, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.48, "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament", recalls the three previous special sessions on disarmament that were held during the period 1978 to 1988, and calls for further steps that would lead to the convening of the fourth special session with the participation of all Member States, subject to the emergence of a consensus on its objectives and agenda. Such a session would, *inter alia*, offer an opportunity to mobilize world public opinion for the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the control and reduction of conventional armaments.

Although the Disarmament Commission could not reach agreement on the objectives and agenda for SSOD IV, the sponsors of the draft resolution believe that these objectives can be further pursued through consultations with Member States by the Secretary-General on the objectives, agenda and timing of SSOD IV. As was the case with the resolution adopted at the fifty-third session, the members of the Non-Aligned Movement trust that this draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.49 is entitled "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament", and such a draft resolution was adopted for the first time at the fifty-third session. It underlines the importance of all regional centres as mechanisms to inform, educate and generate public understanding and support in the field of arms control and disarmament. This draft resolution calls for not only the maintenance, but also the revitalization, of the three regional centres, in Nepal, Peru and Togo. The activities and programmes conducted by these regional centres make a valuable contribution towards changing basic attitudes to peace and security, to the identification of pertinent issues and approaches, especially through the organization of meetings and conferences, and to the promotion of regional and subregional dialogue on disarmament.

These centres seek to provide useful insights on common problems and thereby facilitate progress towards greater security at lower levels of armaments. They also serve as a useful forum for consideration of relevant issues and new approaches to arms limitation. The draft resolution further requests Member States in each of these regions and those in a position to do so, as well as intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and foundations, to make voluntary contributions to the three regional centres so as to enable them to fulfil their role and to enhance their programmes and activities. It is the hope of the Non-Aligned Movement that the draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

Finally, the draft decision, in document A/C.1/54/L.50, calls for the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the fifty-sixth session of the item "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security".

Mr. Coutts (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation remains firmly convinced of the vital need to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

The changes in the international landscape that foreshadowed better prospects for international peace and security have not given rise to more peaceful coexistence among peoples; rather, tensions, uncertainties and local conflictshave heightened, with clear global repercussions and ramifications.

The new concepts of security, dual-use technology, qualitative changes in models and types of increasingly destructive weapons and the emergence of new doctrines that do not exactly favour a climate of disarmament are among the many elements that warrant the convening of such a special session.

It is not possible for us to allow, in addition to vast economic differences, the growth of strategic inequalities and insecurity of peoples. We are convinced of the urgent need to carry out an early review of this deplorable situation and to consider in this context the relationship between disarmament and development, as well as a new framework for human security. There is also a need for a global scrutiny of the worldwide arms trade carried out by the great Powers.

In this regard, we believe that only by strengthening international law, and specifically the powers of the International Court of Justice, based on the provisions of Article 26 of the Charter, can we put all the peoples of the world in a better position to have access to justice and peace.

For all these reasons, and many more, it would be wise to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Although the wording of paragraph 2 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.48 may not be ideal, it would at least make it possible to take a first step and give a mandate that no one can disregard.

Mr. Vasilyev (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of the Republic of Belarus has the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26, under agenda item 65, "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament". The draft resolution is sponsored by Armenia, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Belarus.

The draft resolution proposes to use the Conference on Disarmament as a mechanism that would be brought into action when circumstances required. It is important that its adoption should not involve any financial implications.

The draft contains a reference to all previous General Assembly resolutions on the question of the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

Moreover, it takes note of paragraph 77 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly. The draft emphasizes the determination of Member States to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction that have characteristics comparable in destructive effect to those of weapons of mass destruction identified in the definition of weapons of mass destruction adopted by the United Nations in 1948. In the preambular part it notes the desirability of keeping the matter under review, as appropriate.

In the substantive part of the document there is emphasis on the need for effective measures to avoid the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction. Paragraph 2 is particularly important. By that paragraph the General Assembly would request the Conference on Disarmament, without prejudice to further overview of its agenda, to keep the matter under review, as appropriate, with a view to making, when necessary, recommendations on undertaking specific negotiations on identified types of weapons. By paragraph 3 the Assembly would call upon all States to give favourable consideration to the recommendations of the Conference on Disarmament immediately following their presentation.

The General Assembly would go on to request the Conference on Disarmament to report the results of any consideration of the matter in its annual reports to the General Assembly. Finally, the General Assembly would decide to include on the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session an item entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament".

Without any exaggeration, it can be said that the draft resolution is a unique example of preventive diplomacy, proposing ways and means of responding to possible changes in this most important area. It contains concise, basic provisions already approved by the General Assembly. We feel, therefore, that the Committee can adopt it without a vote, as was the case three years ago, and we call upon delegations to proceed in this manner.

Mr. Sanders (Netherlands): As I am taking the floor for the first time, let me congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and your Bureau on your election. We have full confidence in your competent leadership to guide us in this year's session of the First Committee.

I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of 93 sponsors, the well-known draft resolution on transparency in armaments, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39, under agenda item 76 (b).

Transparency in armaments is one of the major confidence-building principles which enable the international community to be better informed about military developments and thus diminish misperceptions and prevent the distortion of information.

It is important to note that the concept of transparency in armaments is not restricted to conventional armaments. The desirability of transparency applies as much to weapons of mass destruction as it does to conventional weapons. Nuclear, chemical and biological weapons mechanisms have their own agendas, however, sometimes maybe even new agendas. Important instruments have been developed, or are in the process of being developed, which provide, *inter alia*, a major contribution to transparency in the area of weapons of mass destruction. Multilateral treaties related to weapons of mass destruction are there, and there will be more of them in the future.

For conventional armaments, so far, there are only limited instruments available for increasing the degree of transparency. For certain very specific types of conventional arms, we have agreements, such as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) or the Ottawa Convention. For certain regions, we have broader arrangements on conventional armaments, such as the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), a fundamentally adapted version of which will, hopefully, be agreed upon in Istanbul at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's summit meeting in November this year.

Another important regional arrangement for which I would like to express our great support and appreciation is the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions, which was approved on 26 May 1999. This Convention is a legally binding agreement that requires reporting on transfer and procurement of the same seven categories of conventional armaments as specified by the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

It is also a welcome development that initial steps are being taken within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to establish an extensive register and database on small arms and light weapons. We will continue to assist such efforts, and look forward to the establishment of such a register by early next year.

These important regional and subregional initiatives and arrangements on conventional armaments underpin the great contributions that regional organizations can make to transparency in armaments. Unfortunately, however, nothing comparable to the regional examples that I have mentioned exists at the global level, with two exceptions. One is the reporting on military expenditures, found within draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.27, submitted yesterday by Germany and Romania and strongly supported and co-sponsored by us. The other is the primary subject of this draft resolution: the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Given the scarcity and limited nature of global arrangements on major conventional weapons systems, we should do our utmost not only to protect, but, more important, to improve and further develop the Register, both in terms of participation and in terms of scope and reporting.

The success of the Register has so far been mixed. After spectacular growth in participation and reporting in its initial years, we now see a certain levelling off. In a sense, this is a natural phenomenon, but, unfortunately, the lack of growth is also due to a number of drop-outs — countries that reported to the Register in the past, but no longer do so or have been inconsistent in their reporting.

However, the implementation of commitments has become relatively routine for approximately 80 regular participants, including nearly all of the main exporters and most of the major importers of major conventional arms.

A total of 144 States has participated at least once. The latest to join was Bangladesh, which I would like to congratulate most warmly and to which I say "Welcome to the Register!" Overall participation continues to increase gradually. In this context, I would repeat the appeal that Finland made on behalf of the European Union on the first day of our session. Those countries that have no transfers to report in a given year are expected to turn in the so-called nil report. If they do not, we will never know for sure whether or not transfers took place.

The Register has thus become reasonably well established. It has established a de facto norm of transparency in armaments which all Governments must take into account. It provides a significant amount of information which otherwise would not have been available. This information provides a legitimate basis for regional and international consultations between Governments. The Register also performs an important role in public information, putting pressure on accountability of the military and political leaderships. Finally, the Register has stimulated many Governments to improve their national systems for monitoring and controlling arms transfers.

These all seem important reasons to further develop and extend the Register. So far, however, there has been insufficient support among a number of key countries for expanding the Register to cover procurement for national production and military holdings. Nor has agreement as yet been possible on adjusting the scope of the seven categories of arms.

Most of the improvement in reporting has been achieved on a voluntary basis. Consequently, there is a continuing need for the Secretariat and actively interested States to encourage wider and more consistent participation. Such activities would help prepare the ground for the meeting of the group of governmental experts on the Register in 2000, as mentioned in operative paragraph 4 (b). In this context, I wish to express our sincere appreciation for the Secretariat's efforts in compiling and publishing the Register, in assisting Member States with submission of their reporting and in preparing the expert meetings.

One important question that the group of experts might consider is the possible role of the Register in the field of small arms and light weapons. Potentially, the Register could provide a unique tool for monitoring the transfer of certain types of light weapons with military specifications. The idea of connecting two previously unrelated arms control activities and creating a certain degree of synergy is a challenging one.

I sincerely hope that the First Committee will continue to give its widespread support to the draft resolution on transparency in armaments in general and to the Register of Conventional Arms in particular. We very much hope that in the near future we will once again have one consensus resolution on the subject of transparency in armaments.

Ms. Rovirosa (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico is honoured to speak on behalf of the member countries of the Rio Group — Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela — on agenda item 76 (b), relating to transparency in armaments.

We believe that regional and multilateral efforts designed to limit and gradually reduce acquisitions of conventional weapons, in the context of a process aimed at general and complete disarmament, should be encouraged, taking into account the need of States to protect their security and keeping in mind the inherent right to self-defence enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

In order to facilitate the development and effective application of disarmament agreements, we need to encourage confidence-building measures among States, in particular those relating to transparency in arms procurement and stockpiles. In this spirit, at their eighteenth meeting the Foreign Ministers of the member countries of the Rio Group's permanent consultation and political coordination mechanism, held in Veracruz, Mexico, on 19 March 1999, stated their commitment to avoid arms races in the region and to work towards that objective by means of confidence- and security-building measures and by increasing cooperation between our countries.

We welcome the adoption of the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), on 7 June 1999, in Guatemala City. The purpose of that legal instrument is to enhance regional openness and transparency in the acquisition of conventional weapons by exchanging information about such acquisitions in order to foster confidence between the States of the Americas.

In accordance with the provisions of the Convention, the States members of the OAS undertake to report annually their imports and exports in the previous calendar year of conventional weapons that come within the seven categories of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Furthermore, they are to provide details of acquisitions stemming from national production.

An innovative aspect of the Inter-American Convention is that it permits any non-member State of the OAS to provide annual information on its exports of conventional weapons to States parties to the Convention. This information will make it possible to identify the importing State and the volume and type of conventional weapons being exported. It may include any relevant additional points, such as specifications and model.

We believe that the commitment made at the regional level should have a counterpart at the multilateral level. The Rio Group hopes that with the Convention's gradual entry into force more Member States from the hemisphere will provide the Secretary-General of the United Nations with information concerning exports and imports of such weapons.

We trust that the first meeting of the group of experts to be convened in 2000 to consider the continuing operation of the Register and its further development will be able to address broadly the measures required to secure transparency with regard to weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. The ultimate objective of confidence-building among States cannot be limited in scope; to be really effective, it must cover the whole spectrum of weaponry.

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): In the light of the importance my delegation attaches to the problem of small arms and light weapons proliferation, I wish to recall its remarks made during the general debate in the Comittee. My delegation wishes to make the following additional observations on the subject, in the wake of the report (A/54/258) of the Secretary-General.

The role of the United Nations in raising the necessary awareness of the growing problem of small arms and light weapons has been commendable. My delegation welcomes the recent submission to this Committee of that comprehensive report, with useful recommendations prepared by the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms.

Despite the fact that small arms and light weapons do not cause the conflicts in which they are used, they can exacerbate and prolong the conflicts and increase their lethality. There is a close link between small arms and light weapons and insecurity. The easy circulation and transfer of such weapons impede post-conflict reconstruction endeavours and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.

The Secretary-General has rightly called small arms weapons of personal destruction, because they lead to the devastation of civilian populations. Their excessive accumulation is facilitated by low cost, easy availability and minimal maintenance. What is of particular concern is that hundreds of thousands of children below the age of 16 have been exploited as participants in armed conflicts in which small arms and light weapons are frequently used. As small arms and light weapons used in armed conflicts require a quick resupply of ammunition, strengthened controls on ammunition, its explosive components and manufacturing technology can play a crucial role in addressing the problem of small arms and light weapons proliferation.

The Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials, of November 1997, is a worthwhile regional initiative. The scope of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms needs to be broadened to include small arms and light weapons. Ambassador Mitsuro Donawaki, Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms, expressed optimism about the convening of an international conference on the illicit arms trade in all its aspects when presenting the Group's report a few days ago. My delegation shares this optimism.

Mr. Luck (Australia): I wish to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.16, "Report of the Conference on Disarmament". I understand that draft resolutions on this subject are customarily adopted by consensus.

This year we have prepared what we consider to be a straightforward and factual draft resolution very much in the spirit in which the annual report of the Conference was prepared.

The draft resolution notes the report of the Conference on Disarmament and refers to its importance as a forum for the multilateral negotiation of disarmament conventions. It urges the Conference on Disarmament to fulfil that role and to try make early progress on its substantive work. The draft resolution also records the fact that the Conference has welcomed five new members in the past year and notes that the Conference recognizes that continuing consultations on the question of expansion of membership are desirable.

The draft resolution refers to the collective interest in commencing substantive work in the Conference as soon as possible and addresses the expectation that the President and the incoming President will conduct intersessional consultations to that end. It also urges the continuing review of the agenda and methods of work of the Conference.

As I said, the draft resolution is straightforward and relatively brief. I commend it for adoption.

Mr. Albuquerque (Portugal): I wish to refer, on behalf of Denmark, Greece, Luxembourg and Portugal, to document A/C.1/54/L.16, concerning the report of the Conference on Disarmament, which has just been introduced by the representative of Australia.

We recognize that the Conference on Disarmament is the only global multilateral disarmament negotiating forum for the international community and that it has a primary role in substantive negotiations concerning priority questions of disarmament. We therefore attach major importance to becoming a member of the Conference.

Rule 2 of the rules of procedure of the Conference on Disarmament provides that the membership of the Conference will be reviewed at regular intervals. The reason for this rule is clear. It stems from the tension between the limited membership of the Conference on the one hand and the universal scope of its task on the other. This task is to negotiate multilateral agreements in the field of disarmament designed to be adhered to by all States.

Therefore, we consider that the Conference on Disarmament should be open to all States that apply for membership. Only this approach will progressively eliminate the tension between limited membership and universality of the Conference activities. Enhancing the Conference's political legitimacy will facilitate the potential universality of the application of legal instruments produced by the Conference.

Each and every decision to move in this direction would therefore need to restate the principle of expansion as a dynamic and phased process in order to avoid the concept of "regular intervals" being wrongly applied.

As a result, our four Governments have expressed their support for the recent decision of the Conference on Disarmament to expand its membership by including five new members, on the understanding that this is an intermediate step in an ongoing process of phased Conference on Disarmament expansion to include all candidates.

The Conference on Disarmament should remain seized of this matter. As consensus was not reached, we reiterate that, as stated by Finland, on behalf of the European Union in the general debate, it is necessary to reappoint a special coordinator at the beginning of the 2000 session to consider this issue. In this context, we welcome the fact that draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.16 notes that the Conference on Disarmament recognizes the importance of continuing consultations on the review of its membership.

In conclusion, Denmark, Greece, Luxembourg and Portugal express the hope that these consultations will lead to a successful treatment of the question of the Conference's membership, to which they attach great importance.

Ms. Kunadi (India): My delegation wishes to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Reducing nuclear danger", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.31, sponsored by Bhutan, Mauritius, Fiji, the Sudan and India.

The delegation of India highlighted in the First Committee last year the fact that, with the end of the cold war more than a decade ago, there is no justification for thousands of nuclear weapons being maintained in a state of hair-trigger alert, creating unacceptable risks of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons. This could have catastrophic consequences for all mankind.

Therefore, India took the initiative of introducing last year the draft resolution entitled "Reducing nuclear danger", which received widespread support in the General Assembly. It put forward a modest and practical proposal, calling for a review of nuclear doctrines and, in this context, immediate and urgent steps to reduce the risk of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons.

Many nuclear-weapon States and their allies opposed the draft resolution on the grounds that there were a number of technical issues involved. While acknowledging the technical complexities, we believe that these can be overcome through the necessary political commitment.

It is accepted that the elimination of nuclear weapons under a non-discriminatory and multilaterally verifiable treaty requires complex negotiation. However, there is no justification for thousands of nuclear weapons being maintained in a state of hair-trigger alert, creating an unacceptable risk of unintentional or accidental use that could have catastrophic consequences for all mankind. It is imperative that, as we prepare to enter the new millennium, the international community recognize and acknowledge the need for urgent, practical steps that will diminish the prospect of such a catastrophe.

In addition, the international community has legitimate cause for concern over what has been called the "Y2K problem", and is therefore entitled to have clear commitments from all nuclear-weapon States that the most important objective of their policies is to remove the danger of war and reduce the risk of accidental or unintentional use of nuclear weapons.

A number of programmes and measures to achieve global nuclear disarmament put forward by States, eminent individuals or non-governmental organizations have also attributed the highest priority to the need for steps to be taken to reduce the risk of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons.

The 1996 Canberra Commission on the elimination of nuclear weapons identified the first step as taking nuclear forces off alert. A special statement made by the Pugwash Conference on the impasse in nuclear disarmament in 1998 made a similar call. Non-governmental organizations such as the Friends of the Earth, the Union of Concerned Societies, the Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers, the Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy, the Stimpson Centre and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War have also called for removing the hair-trigger posture and standing alert of nuclear forces. The Tokyo Forum report also recognized the importance of moving in the direction of reducing the alert status of nuclear forces.

It is well known that there have been several instances of near accidental launch, often triggered by incomplete or inaccurate assessment of available information. These events demonstrate the error-prone character of maintaining large arsenals in a state of high alert.

My delegation therefore reintroduces the draft resolution this year with the expectation that the international community can take necessary action, both individually and collectively, to reduce the risks posed by hair-trigger-alert postures and related doctrines of use. In view of the urgency of the matter, we also propose in this year's draft resolution to request the Secretary-General to report to the next session of the General Assembly on information with regard to this issue, using existing resources, including input from the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

In order to make the draft resolution as widely acceptable as possible, we have kept it simple and free from references to contentious issues. We believe that it advocates a desirable objective and hope that it will receive widespread support in the Committee.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): I have pleasure in introducing the draft resolution submitted by Nigeria, the Sudan and Swaziland, as well as my own delegation, under agenda item 76 (b), entitled "Transparency in armaments", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.21.

Since the adoption in 1991 of resolution 46/36 L, which established the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Egypt has always advocated the principle of transparency in military matters and has been supportive of the objectives underlying the establishment of the Register.

Egypt considers that transparency in all fields of armament represents a positive step and a solid confidence-building factor, but not an arms control measure. In this regard, we believe that transparency should facilitate tangible progress in the field of general and complete disarmament and that it has exceptional potential to contribute effectively to common efforts to achieve a higher degree of collective security among States. To realize this objective, Egypt participated in all panels of governmental experts set up following the adoption of the founding resolution, 46/36 L, and chaired the very first, pioneering Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments at the Conference on Disarmament. We also coordinated the work of the Group of 21 on this issue.

The Register is, above all, a global undertaking that undoubtedly has a significant effect in both global and regional contexts. Egypt recognizes the Register in its current form as an important first step towards the promotion of transparency in all military matters. However, the evolutionary nature of this mechanism was made abundantly clear in resolution 46/36 L. It was clear then that there was a prescribed time-frame for such an evolution to be completed, that being the work of the 1994 Group of Experts mandated to undertake this task.

Egypt is disappointed at the outcome of the work done by the Group of Experts not only in 1994, but also in 1997. In both cases it was unable to reach any agreement on related aspects of the further development of the Register.

Egypt is totally convinced that the principle of transparency should apply to all types of armaments, including all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and the transfer of equipment and technology directly related to the development and manufacture of such weapons, as well as to high technology with military applications.

In this context, the priorities in the field of disarmament agreed to in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly must be kept in mind when addressing either disarmament or collateral measures, such as transparency.

The achievement of transparency cannot be based on a selective approach. Such an approach is definitely counter-productive and would contribute to a loss of confidence and an inability to rely on the information which the Register provides in assessing the security needs of States.

As we were not impressed by the prospect of the possible eventual development of the Register in terms of the expansion of its scope since the adoption of resolution 46/36 L, we were neither willing nor able to continue to rely on a mere mirage of hope. It became an imperative need to introduce in 1997, along with other sponsors, a new resolution under the agenda item entitled "Transparency in armaments", aimed at addressing those aspects of the transparency issues which have not been adequately dealt with or reflected in the last three meetings of panels of experts.

The idea of expanding the scope of the Register in order to increase transparency related to weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, was also introduced by other States. I quote here from the presentation made by Professor [Harald Muller before the meeting of the Programme for Promoting Nuclear Non-Proliferation, which took place during the period 12-14 March 1999:

"The concept of a nuclear arms register goes one step further. It was first issued by German Foreign Minister Kinkel in 1993, but strongly rebuffed by the three western nuclear-weapons States. However, the idea is worth reconsidering in the context of greater nuclear stability, arms reduction and disarmament."

In our draft resolution this year we request the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts to be convened in the year 2000, and taking into account the views submitted by Member States, to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the expansion of the Register to include military holdings, procurement through national production, delivery systems and transfer of armament technology, and to elaborate practical means for the development of the Register in order to increase transparency related to weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and to transfer equipment and technology directly related to the development and manufacture of such weapons.

The support received by the Egyptian draft last year, in particular the 104 votes in favour, is indeed tangible testimony to the fact that Egypt is not the only country concerned about the selective way in which the transparency issue has been handled so far. We hope that this year's draft will enjoy even greater support.

Mr. Calovski (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): On behalf of the delegations of Andorra, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Liberia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and my own delegation, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.40, under agenda item 84, "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security". The draft resolution is entitled "Maintenance of international security — stability and development of South-Eastern Europe".

Since 1993 the First Committee has been adopting resolutions concerning the situation in the Balkans, in South-Eastern Europe. The goal of our present proposal is to support the positive developments in the region and the efforts that have helped the region overcome its difficulties – political, social or economic; to promote disarmament and confidence-building measures in the region; and to enhance its integration into the Euro-structures.

This year the draft resolution also takes into account developments after the Kosovo conflict, specifically

Security Council resolution (1244/1999) and the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, both adopted in June this year. The main thrust, therefore, of the draft resolution is the implementation of the Security Council resolution and the Stability Pact, and support for other positive efforts concerning the region with the same aim.

The draft resolution stresses some important basic needs for the region, such as development of good-neighbourly relations and overcoming problems by peaceful means, and affirms the need for observance of the main principles of the United Nations Charter. Its message concerns building a better future for the region as an important part of Europe. Thus, in operative paragraph 1 it reaffirms the urgency of the consolidation of South-Eastern Europe as a region of peace, security, stability, democracy, cooperation, economic development, observance of human rights and good-neighbourliness, thus contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security and enhancing the prospects for sustained development and prosperity for all peoples in the region as an integral part of Europe.

The sponsors of the draft resolution believe that the attainment of these goals is possible and deserves the support of the General Assembly and the international community.

As I stated earlier, the resolution has no financial implications and we hope it will be adopted without a vote. Its text is clear, and it is not really necessary for me to read it out or paraphrase either its preambular or operative part.

The sponsors are negotiating a few small changes in the text. We shall finish this process as soon as possible, and I hope that we can inform the Secretariat of the changes in good time.

I would like to express my great satisfaction to all delegations that have shown interest in and have supported this very important initiative for our region.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): At the beginning of this meeting a we circulated a detailed list of the clusters of draft resolutions on which action will be taken, if the Committee concurs, starting Monday next. The Chair takes the view that this clustering is a very practical and efficient way of tackling various items. We believe that in this way, we will be following an approach that will make our work more organized. If no delegation has an objection to the way in which the list is presented, we shall consider the list adopted and we shall proceed as indicated in the document that has distributed. As of Monday we shall begin taking action on draft resolutions, starting with draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1.

To date a great number of draft resolutions have already been introduced. I urge delegations wishing to introduce other draft resolutions to do so as soon as possible, because we have only two more meetings reserved for this stage of our work, if we follow the course that we have decided to follow.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/54/PV.18

General Assembly

Fifty-fourth Session

Official Records

First Committee

18th Meeting

Thursday, 28 October 1999, 10 a.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. González . . . . (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects; introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

Ms. Ramírez (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) countries, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, as well as Bolivia and Chile, with reference to agenda item 76, "General and complete disarmament".

The re-establishment of democracy in Latin America made it possible to overcome competing visions of security, abandon policies of confrontation and distrust and establish a conceptual framework based on strengthened cooperation, transparency and integration. As support for democratic consolidation grew, our countries' defence and international security policies came to be decided by the freely elected authorities.

MERCOSUR, born as an economic association, has grown in both importance and size. It is today an economic model based on freedom and democracy, in which cooperation is the very essence of the system. Demonstrating the excellent level of relationships achieved in terms of security and defence, we adopted the Political Declaration of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile as a Zone of Peace (A/53/297), signed at the MERCOSUR presidential summit held in Ushuaia, Argentina on 24 July 1998.

The document declared MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile as a zone of peace, free from weapons of mass destruction. It reaffirmed the commitment of the parties to further cooperation in the areas of confidence-building and security-building measures. It also established that mechanisms for consultation and cooperation on matters of security and defence would be strengthened and the growing linkages between them would be promoted.

The six countries decided to support in the relevant international forums the full application and strengthening of instruments and mechanisms for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and to make concerted efforts in those forums to make headway, in the context of a gradual and systematic process, in consolidating international agreements designed to attain the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. This challenge is even more valid today.

The six countries also committed themselves to make progress towards the realization of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile as a zone free from anti-personnel landmines and to endeavour to extend that zone to the entire hemisphere.

Through the Ushuaia Declaration, MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile reaffirmed their commitment to broaden and systematize the information that they provide to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and to establish a uniform methodology for reporting military expenditure, with a view to increasing transparency and fostering confidence in this domain.

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile also agreed to support the work of the Committee on Hemispheric Security of the Organization of American States (OAS), especially as regards the mandate entrusted to it in the Plan of Action of the Second Summit of the Americas.

Finally, the six countries agreed to encourage cooperation between their members with a view to the exclusively peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy and space science and technology.

The Declaration is particularly significant as an example of the establishment of a security scenario based on peaceful cooperation in the Southern Cone. In addition, as reflected in those undertakings, the six countries' participation in international activities is designed to bring about a stable and peaceful world, not only for the sake of our own development, but also for the development of the international community as a whole, because there can be no development without peace and security.

We are therefore proud to highlight the excellent climate of free and democratic cooperation, which makes MERCOSUR a model for the strengthening of international peace and security.

Mr. Nene (South Africa): The international community's primary focus has for many years been the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Appropriate attention has not been given to the scourge of the indiscriminate use of small arms and light weapons. The problems associated with the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons now deserves the international community's full attention. Illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons poses a great danger to peace and stability. The indiscriminate use of these weapons also has a negative impact on the reconstruction and development of many developing countries.

The adoption without a vote of resolution 53/77 T, "Illicit traffic in small arms", emphasized the need for a coordinated approach, including through the United Nations, in preparation for global action to address the problems associated with illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. Subsequent consultations by the Secretary-General clearly underlined the importance of regional approaches to dealing with illicit trafficking in small arms in ways most suitable to each region. This was further underlined during the workshops on illicit trafficking in small arms held in Lomé, Togo, and Lima, Peru, respectively arranged by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

On behalf of 74 sponsors, my delegation has pleasure in again introducing a draft resolution on illicit traffic in small arms, which appears in document A/C.1/54/L.44. I wish to extend our appreciation to the large number of delegations which have already co-sponsored the draft resolution, and invite other delegations also to do so. Not only does the number of sponsors indicate the strong support for the objectives of this draft resolution, but it also shows that support is geographically widely based.

I wish to draw attention to the fact that document A/C.1/54/L.44 has, according to the secretariat, been revised for technical reasons. My delegation has requested the secretariat not to make any editorial changes to the text of a draft resolution which has already been approved by its sponsors.

The draft resolution recognizes the value of regional indigenous approaches to the problem of illicit trafficking in small arms, and underlines the importance of increased cooperation and coordination among Member States as well as the relevant intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations. To this end, the Secretary-General is requested to continue his broad-based consultations so as to provide the 2001 United Nations conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons with information on the magnitude and scope of the phenomenon of illicit trafficking in small arms. The Secretary-General should also provide information on possible measures to combat illicit trafficking in and circulation of small arms, including those suited to indigenous regional approaches. The conference should also be provided with an assessment of the role of the United Nations in collecting, collating, sharing and disseminating information on illicit trafficking in small arms. The results of these broad-based consultations will provide the necessary authoritative information to assist Member States in taking practical steps to address this problem.

Another important objective of the draft resolution is to recognize the importance of regional initiatives and their collective impact on any international action to address illicit trafficking in small arms. To this end, Member States are encouraged to promote regional and subregional initiatives to address the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, while inviting the Secretary-General and States in a position to do so to assist States taking such initiatives in affected regions. The Secretary-General is invited to use these initiatives as part of his consultations.

The draft resolution furthermore recognizes the impact of surplus small arms and light weapons on the illicit trade in these weapons, and welcomes the practical measures undertaken by Member States to destroy surplus weapons and confiscated or collected weapons, in accordance with the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his reports on small arms. Member States in a position to do so are encouraged to take appropriate national measures to destroy surplus small arms and light weapons, confiscated or collected, and to provide, on a voluntary basis, information to the Secretary-General on types and quantities destroyed.

The draft resolution also invites Member States in a position to do so to provide the necessary assistance, bilaterally, regionally and through multilateral channels, such as the United Nations, in support of the implementation of measures associated with combating illicit trafficking in and circulation of small arms.

It is the belief of the sponsors that this draft resolution, like last year's, can be adopted without a vote.

Ms. Rovirosa (Mexico) *(spoke in Spanish)*: It is an honour for the delegation of Mexico to speak on behalf of the 19 members of the Rio Group on agenda item 76 (m), "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas".

Nearly three decades have passed since the first nuclear-weapon-free zone was established in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the aim of re-creating the world we once had, in which these weapons did not exist. Later other nuclear-weapon-free zones were established by the Treaties of Raratonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba, whose States parties and signatories are committed to the same objective. With the addition of the denuclearized regime established by the Antarctic Treaty, the southern hemisphere and adjacent areas are effectively free of nuclear weapons.

The process begun in 1967 with the signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco has not paused. Despite the complacency in some areas of our planet over the deadlock in multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, progress is still being made at the regional level.

The Rio Group enthusiastically welcomes the efforts of the five countries in Central Asia that are trying to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. We hope that their negotiations will soon meet with success. The immediate consequence will be obvious: a larger area of the earth's surface free of nuclear weapons.

We should also like to express our approval of the agreement reached during the 1999 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, giving Member States of the United Nations guidelines for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of agreements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. Our gratitude goes in particular to the Chairman of the Working Group that considered this item, Ambassador Emilio Izquierdo, who, as representative of Ecuador, one of the States members of the Rio Group, made clear once again our countries' unwavering commitment to nuclear disarmament.

Lasting international peace and security cannot be based on maintaining nuclear forces of military alliances, nor can it be preserved through a precarious balance of deterrence or doctrines of strategic superiority. Genuine, lasting peace can be created only through the effective implementation of the system of security provided for in the United Nations Charter and the realization of general and complete disarmament.

We in the Rio Group are convinced of the importance for peace and international security of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.34, "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas". The growing support that our initiative has gained in the past three years bears witness to this.

We hope that those delegations that have in the past expressed some objections to similar draft resolutions will this year be able fully to appreciate the purpose that animates the great majority of sponsors, which is to promote the nuclear-weapon-free status of a considerable part of our planet.

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): It gives me great pleasure to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.14, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific", on behalf of the following sponsors: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam.

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific owes its birth to the World Disarmament Campaign launched by the General Assembly at its second special session devoted to disarmament (SSOD II) in 1982, whose principal objective it is to create an understanding of and public support for the goals of the United Nations in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. In pursuance of these goals, the General Assembly established the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, to be headquartered in Kathmandu, through its resolution 42/39 D of 30 November 1987.

The Regional Centre was considered to be operational upon the signing by the Government of the Kingdom of Nepal and the United Nations of an Agreement and a Memorandum of Understanding on 8 June 1988 and the holding of the first regional disarmament meeting in Kathmandu on 30 January 1989. It is under this Agreement and the Memorandum that Nepal's commitment to assisting the United Nations in securing all the necessary facilities for the establishment and functioning of the Regional Centre in Kathmandu is spelt out.

Mr. Sadauskas (Lithuania), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

In view of current developments with regard to the other two Regional Centres, one in Lomé, Togo, and the other in Lima, Peru, which have started functioning with their Directors operating from the respective regions, as well as the 1999 report (A/54/255) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, a separate operative paragraph has been added to the usual draft resolution to reflect the present realities.

This new paragraph requests the Secretary-General to initiate consultations with the host, the Government of the Kingdom of Nepal, as well as with other Member States concerned and interested organizations to assess the possibility of operating the Centre from Kathmandu more effectively.

The draft resolution welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the Regional Centre, in which he mentions the continued relevance of the Centre's mandate and expresses the conviction that the Centre can be a useful instrument for promoting security dialogue in a climate of cooperation in the region.

The draft resolution also contains commendations of the useful activities performed by the Centre in encouraging regional and subregional security dialogue and the promotion of disarmament measures through the organization of seminars and meetings at different locations in the Asia-Pacific region.

In one of its operative paragraphs, the draft resolution would have the General Assembly reaffirm its strong support for the continuation and further strengthening of the Centre and underscore the importance of the Kathmandu Process as a principal tool for enhancing security dialogue both at regional and subregional levels. The draft resolution also expresses appreciation for the continuing political support and financial contributions to the Regional Centre.

Additionally, the draft resolution reiterates its appeal to Member States, particularly those within the Asia-Pacific region, as well as to international governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations, to provide the voluntary contributions so essential for conducting the programme of activities of the Centre.

Last, but not least, the draft resolution contains a request to the Secretary-General to provide all necessary support, within existing resources, to the Regional Centre in carrying out its programme of activities and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on its implementation.

The sponsors earnestly hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus, as has been the case in the past. Its adoption without a vote will testify to the fact that the General Assembly continues to support the Centre as a valuable forum for disarmament meetings in order to promote peace, security and confidence-building measures in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.38, entitled "Regional disarmament", on behalf of Bangladesh, Bolivia, Belgium, Egypt, Fiji, Indonesia, Nepal, Niger, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Turkey, Tunisia and my own delegation.

The draft resolution reflects the virtual international consensus in support of regional measures for confidence-building, non-proliferation and disarmament at the regional and subregional levels as essential complements to the global efforts to promote disarmament and international security. In the post-cold-war era, the imperative need for such measures – especially in relation to areas of tension – is self-evident, as major threats to peace and security have proliferated in recent years on account of regional disputes and tensions.

These conflicts often lead to the excessive acquisition and accumulation of armaments, raising the chances of escalation in the scale of the violence and the suffering in ongoing conflicts. The asymmetries in defence capabilities created by such situations raise the dangers of aggression and the use of force. This could in turn lead to a search for non-conventional means of self-defence and deterrence.

The international community has now fully accepted the proposition that arms control and disarmament measures at the global level must be complemented by measures at the regional level which specially address the particular dynamics of specific regions. Global and regional disarmament must therefore be pursued simultaneously, since both are essential to create the conditions for general and complete disarmament.

The draft resolution affirms these propositions regarding the importance of regional disarmament. It takes into account most of the guidelines for regional disarmament adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1993. It also underlines that regional disarmament measures, by enhancing the security of regional States, will contribute to international peace and security by reducing the risk of regional conflicts.

The draft resolution also calls on States to conclude agreements, wherever possible, for nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels. The progress made towards nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace in several parts of the world is a most encouraging sign of the potential of the regional approach to disarmament.

Therefore, the draft resolution welcomes the initiatives that have been taken by some States towards disarmament, non-proliferation and security at the regional and subregional levels, and supports the efforts to promote confidence-building measures as well. Pakistan is confident that the draft resolution will be adopted once again by consensus.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): I wish to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.9.

The Government of Japan submitted a draft resolution under this title for the first time in 1994 to prepare favourable ground for the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review and Extension Conference by consolidating the commitment of the international community to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. I recall in this context that the idea put forward by that draft resolution found its way into the principles and objectives of 1995. The follow-up draft resolutions since then have enjoyed a better reception than did the first, culminating in support by the five nuclear-weapon States in the past two years.

This year's session of the First Committee stands at a similar juncture to the year 1994, when the first of these draft resolutions was introduced. The First Committee this year can and should play a role conducive to the success of the NPT Review Conference in the same way as it did five years ago, by trying to consolidate the political will of the international community to advance towards the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons.

Let me touch upon the new and most salient points of our draft resolution. We have introduced a few new preambular paragraphs. The fourth paragraph welcomes the international efforts to promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, clearly demonstrated at the conference convened this month in Vienna in accordance with article 14 of that Treaty.

The fifth preambular paragraph takes note of the report of the Tokyo Forum for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, as we believe that the timing of the report has generally been acknowledged as opportune, and its contents have broadly been received as useful inputs for the future discussion on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Being aware of some countries' reservations about the content of the report, we have carefully chosen the most neutral term: "Taking note of".

The sixth preambular paragraph expresses the recognition that the enhancement of international peace and security and the promotion of nuclear disarmament mutually complement and strengthen each other. The seventh preambular paragraph underlines the significance of the NPT as the cornerstone of the international regime for nuclear non-proliferation and as an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

These new paragraphs, combined with the old eighth preambular paragraph, provide the conceptual basis for the operative paragraphs which follow them. Operative paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 are the same as those of last year's resolution.

In operative paragraph 4, which outlines several important and necessary measures for making advances towards the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons, we have introduced two new elements. One, which appears as the last phrase of subparagraph (b), is a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The other is reflected in the last phrase of subparagraph (d), which refers to the continuation of the bilateral nuclear disarmament process between the United States of America and the Russian Federation beyond START III.

Operative paragraph 6 has been extended from last year's paragraph to cover the placement under international control of fissile material in excess of that needed for defence purposes. Such action is important, as it effectively enhances the irreversibility of nuclear disarmament.

Operative paragraph 8 stresses the importance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) model additional protocol, and encourages all States to conclude an additional protocol with the IAEA. The additional protocol greatly increases the effectiveness of the IAEA safeguards and sets a new standard for the nuclear non-proliferation mechanism.

Operative paragraph 9 underlines the importance of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and calls upon all States parties to the Treaty to intensify their efforts with a view to reaching an agreement on a new set of principles and objectives. Beyond all the semantics of "a new agenda" or "a renewed agenda", the single most important point, as I have already emphasized in my general statement, is that the international community stands at a crossroads, and does not have the luxury of allowing the 2000 Review Conference to fail.

It is true that we should not prejudge the outcome of the Conference at this stage, but we can nevertheless let the First Committee play a role in paving the way to its success by urging the 187 States involved to make serious efforts with a view to reaching a forward-looking and solid outcome at the Conference. The caution not to raise expectations is plausible, but how will it be possible to call the Conference a success by agreeing now not to have any hope at all?

Lastly, operative paragraph 10 refers to the constructive role played by civil society in promoting nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear disarmament is at once the most simple and most complex item on the disarmament agenda: the most simple, because the goal is clearly set as the elimination of nuclear weapons; the most complex, because divergent views exist on the best approach to reach that goal. My Government's approach focuses on creating an agreement on and implementing near- and medium-term concrete and realistic measures. At the same time, we also stress the necessity to identify future measures to take successive steps as quickly as possible. My delegation hopes that this approach can again receive the broad support of Member States this year and provide the international community with a basis for moving forward on nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Holm (New Zealand): It is a pleasure to join the other lead sponsors – Mexico, Japan, and Australia – in putting forward the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) draft resolution, contained in document A/C.1/54/L.23.

The CTBT is of immense significance for New Zealand. For decades we have been one of the strongest advocates of a comprehensive nuclear test ban as an essential step along the road to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and we worked actively for the conclusion of the Treaty and its adoption in 1996.

Since the adoption and opening for signature of the CTBT, some 156 States have signed and 51 have ratified. New Zealand, for its part, ratified the CTBT in March this year. The large and ever-growing number of States that have signed on to the Treaty is very encouraging; we are especially pleased that the ratification process has accelerated.

But the CTBT is not yet in force. It is essential for the enhancement of international peace and security that a universal and internationally and effectively verifiable nuclear-test-ban treaty should enter into force at the earliest possible date.

The draft resolution is transparent and balanced. It draws from the Declaration issued recently at the Conference in Vienna on the CTBT's entry into force. Its calls are straightforward. Its focus is on the need for all States to sign and ratify the Treaty and for those that have not yet signed to refrain from acts that could defeat its object and purpose in the meanwhile.

For New Zealand, universal adherence to the Treaty has always been crucial. But we believe that countries which have carried out nuclear tests in the past and which have signed but not yet ratified have a particular responsibility to confirm their commitment to the test ban. New Zealand was thus deeply disappointed by the decision of the United States Senate not to proceed to ratification of the Treaty. Ratification by the United States and the two remaining nuclear-weapon States yet to ratify would represent a sign of confidence in the Treaty and would provide a powerful incentive for others to follow suit. We urge the United States Administration to continue its efforts to ensure that ratification occurs sooner rather than later.

This draft resolution refers to the efforts of the CTBT Organization Preparatory Commission to ensure that the Treaty's verification regime will be capable of meeting the verification requirements at entry into force. This is important. The CTBT will have the most comprehensive verification network ever set up under an international treaty. As well as providing the essential underpinning for the Treaty commitment, it will serve as a verification model to be drawn on as the global disarmament and arms control regime is strengthened through new instruments. I am pleased to confirm that the establishment or upgrading of New Zealand's six monitoring stations is well under way.

We very much hope that this draft resolution will be adopted by consensus. We believe it is vital and timely that the international community send an unequivocal signal of support for the CTBT. The draft resolution, which is factual and draws on sources that have found the widest international support, will achieve that goal.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): I should like to offer a few comments on some of the draft resolutions put forward by various delegations and under examination by the Committee this year.

It has been Viet Nam's consistent policy to underline the importance of making contributions to building a world free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In line with this policy, Viet Nam supports the initiatives and measures to promote the elimination of nuclear weapons as well as of other weapons of mass destruction.

While significant progress has yet to be made by the international community, we are still confident that the world community as a whole is forging ahead towards a better and more secure environment. Most noticeably, the end of the cold war and the reduction of tension in the relationships between the nuclear Powers present new opportunities for the United Nations and the world community to formulate effective measures in the field of nuclear disarmament.

Yet mistrust still lingers and reliance on the policy of nuclear deterrence still persists. These are, in our view, the major obstacles preventing us from commencing negotiations to conclude a convention banning nuclear weapons. Disarmament in general – nuclear disarmament in particular – is a complex and difficult process, which calls for innovative initiatives and concerted efforts from both nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States. But most important of all is the need for political will and the determination to pursue vigorously the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Viet Nam is a traditional co-sponsor of a number of draft resolutions presented to the Committee this year. We wish to lay particular emphasis on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.41, introduced by Myanmar. We think this is the most comprehensive draft resolution on nuclear disarmament, and we therefore strongly support its adoption.

Viet Nam is also a traditional co-sponsor of the draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*", drafted again this year by Malaysia, as contained in document A/C.1/54/L.43. Our delegation recognizes the common concern that a categorical commitment to the total elimination of nuclear arsenals is yet to be made by the nuclear-weapon States. We wish, therefore, to reiterate the need to uphold the relevance of the Court's decisions.

Furthermore, from the opinion of the Court against the threat and use of nuclear weapons, it is obvious that the nuclear-weapon States must commit themselves to an international legally binding agreement to assure countries that forswear nuclear weapons against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. These common concerns about the serious threat of such a horrible type of weapon have been reflected in a draft resolution before the Committee, and our delegation will therefore render its strongest support to that draft resolution, contained in document A/C.1/54/L.36, presented by Pakistan.

In our view, the best way to pursue our ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons is through a convention banning them, as set out in the draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons", in document A/C.1/54/L.33, introduced by India. It should be stressed here once again that Viet Nam consistently prefers a forthcoming plan to do away with nuclear weapons under a specified time programme.

At this session of the First Committee, Viet Nam is pleased to co-sponsor two further draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament: the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.34, presented by Brazil, and the draft resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", embodied in document A/C.1/54/L.18, presented by Ireland. Viet Nam considers these as very important draft resolutions and fully supports their adoption by the Committee.

Mr. Ouane (Mali) *(spoke in French)*: Speaking for the first time before the Committee at this session, I have the pleasure of conveying to the Chairman the sincere congratulations of the delegation of Mali on his well-deserved election. We are convinced that thanks to his ability the Committee's work will be crowned with success. Our delegation assures him and the other members of the Bureau of our fullest cooperation.

I have the pleasure of speaking today on behalf of the delegations of Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Fiji, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Japan, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Togo and Mali, in order to introduce the draft resolution under agenda item 76(d), "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them", which appears in document A/C.1/54/L.25, of 22 October 1999.

The draft resolution results from its authors' will to combat the proliferation of small arms, particularly in the West African region. In this perspective, the draft underscores that the illicit proliferation and circulation of and traffic in small arms constitute an impediment to development and a threat to populations and to national and regional security, and are a factor contributing to the destabilization of States.

The draft indicates that the scope of this phenomenon has led the States of the subregion to take important initiatives - in particular, by adopting a moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of small arms and light weapons in West Africa, as well as by the implementation of the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) through a Plan of Action.

The draft also states that these initiatives were welcomed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at its thirty-fifth session, held in Algiers in July 1999, which has pledged its full support.

In addition, the draft resolution recalls the important measures taken by the United Nations to curb the phenomenon of the proliferation of small arms, particularly by the designation of its Department for Disarmament Affairs as the coordination centre for all United Nations activities concerning small arms.

The draft resolution emphasizes the impact of the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms, in particular on the convening of an international conference on the illicit arms trade no later than 2001.

That is the content of the present draft resolution, which in essence reflects the provisions of the resolution adopted last year under the same agenda item. I am convinced that all our colleagues present here share the conviction of the authors of the draft resolution that today we have the opportunity to move forward towards greater cooperation and improved coordination of our overall efforts to curb the phenomenon of the proliferation of small arms and its devastating effects.

In conclusion, I should like to sincerely thank all the co-sponsors for their constant support and to express the wish that, as in the past, the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Ado Abou (Niger) *(spoke in French)*: Since I am speaking in the Committee for the first time, I join previous speakers in congratulating the Chairman, both on his well-deserved election and on the excellent way in which he is conducting our work. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

The delegation of Niger would also like to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General for the quality of the documentation made available to us.

With regard to agenda item 76(d), "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them", my delegation agrees fully with the statement made by Mali on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.25. We would simply like to emphasize the need for collective and individual efforts to be made in the framework of the implementation of resolutions adopted by our Organization in order to stem the phenomenon of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

My delegation would like to mention in this regard that our subregional initiatives are based on the moratorium signed in Abuja in October 1998, for whose implementation the heads of State and Government of the Economic

Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have asked for the support of the United Nations system. The Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) that resulted from it is the principal instrument to give impetus to and support for national efforts to attain this common objective.

More recently, at the thirty-fifth summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), held in Algiers last July, African leaders recognized that the continent cannot on its own deal with the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons. They appealed to the international community to support African States in developing and implementing specific programmes to collect and control these weapons.

These subregional and regional initiatives are evidence, if there is any need for it, of the desire to create once and for all a geographical space where security and stability will always characterize the life of States. Nevertheless, this process can only be carried out if the political will of the international community to assist in establishing lasting peace and stability is expressed resolutely and without delay.

At the national level, my delegation would like to emphasize that the Secretary-General's report (A/54/309) on this topic highlighted the fact that Niger, through its National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Arms, has communicated a project for the collection of light weapons and small arms. That document provides information about the Commission, which was established on 28 November 1994, and sets out the background to the problem of the circulation of light weapons in Niger. Funding the initial phase of a five-year programme that the Commission is now finalizing is the major objective.

Nevertheless, although Niger's National Commission was created in 1994, before the United Nations advisory mission was sent to the subregion, efforts to make it operational through technical and financial support from the international community have not yet been followed up. The conclusions drawn by Mr. William Eteki Mboumoua following that mission are, however, enlightening; they confirm that Niger is one of the countries of the subregion most in need of assistance.

The scope and gravity of this phenomenon require that the awareness of populations be heightened without further delay, so that they will give up their arms and so that those which were circulating at the peak of the rebellion may be collected. The peace restored in the north and east of our country following the agreements made in 1995 and 1998 with the leaders of the former armed rebellion should be consolidated. The phase of cantonment, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants currently under way should assist the National Commission for the collection of weapons, which can now count on a climate of harmony and fraternity in order to establish a programme meeting the objectives of disarmament.

In spite of the political changes referred to in the report that I have mentioned, successive Governments have always shown their faith in and constant commitment to the struggle against the small arms trade and against the circulation of small arms. Nevertheless, logistical means will still be required, in addition to a revolving fund to be used to heighten awareness and implement small-scale development projects that can be proposed to disarmed populations as a legal alternative to the use of weapons to ensure the means of survival from day to day or simply for self-defence.

My delegation therefore once again appeals for greater solidarity in this important endeavour and urges the international community to provide States with the necessary assistance. In this connection, my country welcomes certain encouraging initiatives already undertaken, such as those of the Group of Interested States, and hopes to be able to conclude with these partners a programme of activities that will meet the objective of combating the proliferation of small arms.

Ms. Kunadi (India): My delegation wishes to speak as one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", which was introduced by the Ambassador of Sri Lanka.

We support the statement made by the delegation of Sri Lanka on 26 October in the First Committee. The Conference on Disarmament was unable during its 1999 session to address issues related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. India was one of the sponsors of resolution 53/76, which reiterated that the Conference on Disarmament had the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

We have witnessed technological developments, including in ballistic missile defences, which could have the effect of opening up new areas of competition, adding to pressures against the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which we believe is an essential element in maintaining strategic stability. We share the concerns expressed in the final communiqué of the Non-Aligned Movement issued in New York on 23 September regarding the negative implications of these developments and the further erosion of the international climate conducive to the promotion of disarmament and the strengthening of international security.

India supports the early commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of an appropriate instrument that would, as a first step, ensure the non-weaponization of space while preserving the use of space, which is the common heritage of mankind, for the full range of peaceful and developmental activities. Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22 has been submitted to express the overwhelming sentiment in the international community that the Conference on Disarmament should commence work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. Oyugi (Kenya): I should like to make a few comments on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", of which we are a sponsor.

The draft resolution was introduced, appropriately, by the Sri Lankan Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Ambassador Palihakkara. Those of us who have followed the debate at the Conference on Disarmament will recall his valiant efforts in attempting to build a consensus for substantive work on this topic at the Conference. It is regrettable that the Conference was unable substantively to address this matter, as reflected in its report for this year.

The trend of events resulting from advances in space science and technology is quite disturbing. Numerous organizations with an interest in the peaceful uses of outer space have continued to highlight the intentions of some States to militarily dominate outer space. Part of this ambition, we are informed, is known as "Vision for 2020"; the ultimate aim of this programme would appear to be the absolute domination of outer space by denying or severely restricting access to it and use of it by other countries. Such an ambition clearly runs counter to articles III and IV of the Outer Space Treaty. It also puts the survival of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) at risk, as has already been pointed out.

We believe that outer space should be protected from the risk of becoming an arena for an arms race or military confrontation. Since outer space is the common heritage of mankind, no single State should be allowed to dominate it. To this end, a legal regime along the same lines as that of the law of the sea should be elaborated to govern its use. This process could include updating treaties such as the Outer Space Treaty.

In view of the real possibility of an arms race in outer space, appropriate negotiations on an agreement to prevent such a race should begin in the Conference on Disarmament as a matter of priority. This has repeatedly been called for by the Movement of non-aligned countries and by the Group of 21 in Geneva, as it is by this draft resolution.

The Chairman: I urge delegations to introduce the remaining draft resolutions as soon as possible, as we have only one more meeting reserved for this stage of our work.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

United Nations A/C.1/54/PV.19

General Assembly

Fifty-fourth Session

Official Records

First Committee

19th Meeting

Friday, 29 October 1999, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. González . . . . (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects; introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Miranda (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Following the end of the cold war, new risks and actors emerged on the international scene, diversifying the threats to international security. The reform process of the United Nations consequently needs to take on a new dimension, whereby the United Nations and its agencies reassess their capacity to respond effectively to the demands and needs of Member States, including in a fundamental role: that of prevention.

Closer cooperation between the United Nations and the Member States is undoubtedly becoming increasingly important. Despite the efforts made to date, disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons continue to be priority objectives that need to be more vigorously addressed. Similarly, we must forge ahead in the adoption and consolidation of measures geared to ensuring that the development, production and use of other weapons of mass destruction are prohibited. At the same time, the international community must continue its efforts to ensure limits and effective controls on conventional weapons.

Current events in the area of regional and global security demonstrate that we need to strengthen the machinery of the United Nations through a renewed, revitalized and interconnected approach to peace, disarmament and development. The multilateral nature of the United Nations is the best guarantee that there will be no hegemonies. The activities carried out by the United Nations at the regional level are very important in increasing the stability and security of the Member States.

The Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean can contribute significantly to achieving understanding and cooperation among the States of the region, particularly in the fields of peace, disarmament and development.

Effective implementation of the guidelines of the world Organization requires the participation of States and adequate understanding by governmental and international agencies. We therefore need a regional entity that can serve as a nexus for operational interaction among those actors, but especially between the United Nations and the region.

At the level of Latin America and the Caribbean, the regional atmosphere is conducive to developing debate, promoting discussion and generating consensus. Nevertheless, there are problems that require better interaction among actors — civil and military, governmental and non-governmental, national and international — in a forum for achieving non-binding objectives.

The United Nations Regional Centre for peace, disarmament and development are no longer mere remnants of the cold war in playing their role, but rather real actors in the United Nations system, adapting their work to modern demands and actively promoting academic and governmental interaction through the exchange of

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information and the dissemination of international agreements, thereby contributing to the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of peace, disarmament and development in general. The Centre can serve as a forum for reflecting on, disseminating and exchanging positions and experiences and as an entity that will make it possible to renew dialogue and promote consensus, closely analysing regional realities in order to develop more effective measures and thus, through discussion of visions, situations, projects and practical developments, stimulate the search for sustainable peace and development.

In order to obtain positive results, the centres must implement programmes of dissemination and education with the aim of promoting regional peace and security in a way that will contribute to fulfilment of the purposes and principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations.

We are convinced that the Regional Centre should have the resources it needs to become a creative, modern, efficient and effective institution able to encourage a climate favourable to the promotion of universal efforts in the sphere of disarmament. We therefore wish to highlight the importance and relevance of the Regional Centre as a means of promoting close regional relations. The Regional Centre can act as a catalyst for projects and human and material resources in order to optimize efforts, develop and strengthen cooperation in the region and establish new forms of cooperation with other regions.

In this context, I have the honour to submit, on behalf of the Group of States of Latin America and the Caribbean, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.51, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean".

The Regional Centre was created in 1986, pursuant to resolution 41/60 J of 3 December 1986. Headquartered in the city of Lima, Peru, the Centre was established on 1 January 1987 with the purpose of providing "substantive support for the initiatives and other activities of the Member States of the Latin American region for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament, and for the promotion of economic and social development". *(resolution 41/60 J, para. 2)*

Later, in July 1996, the Regional Centre temporarily suspended its work. On the basis of resolution 52/220 of 1997, the General Assembly decided to maintain and revitalize the regional centres of the United Nations. In 1998, the Secretary-General appointed the Director of the Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr. Pericles Gasparini, thereby reviving the Centre's activities.

The draft resolution being put forward today is intended to reiterate the importance of the role the Centre can fulfil in promoting United Nations activities at the regional level in order to strengthen peace, stability, security and development among its Member States. The draft resolution expresses satisfaction with the reinitiation of the activities of the Regional Centre, as provided for in the report of the Secretary-General (A/54/310), including the successful international workshop entitled "Illicit trafficking in small arms: Latin American and Caribbean issues", held in Lima in June 1999.

The draft resolution also expresses appreciation for the political support and financial contributions that have been received and urges all States, as well as international governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations, to make voluntary contributions to strengthen the Centre's programme of activities and their implementation.

Finally, it requests the Secretary-General to provide the Centre with all necessary support so that it may carry out its programme of activities and to report to the General Assembly next year on the implementation of this mandate.

We hope that draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.51, supported by all the States of Latin America and the Caribbean, will receive the broadest possible support from the First Committee so that it can be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Coutts (Chile) *(spoke in Spanish)*: It is a source of great satisfaction to Chile to speak on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.51, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean". My country has always been aware of the need to provide the resources and mechanisms needed for the Centre to undertake its work without delay. Based on a conviction that has been expressed in deeds — that solutions to conflicts must be sought in absolute respect for international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, which has been and continues to be a main point of reference for our resolute efforts in this area — we are happy to see that we have met with success in our efforts to revitalize the Centre. In order to emphasize our active political support, we have decided to make a substantial financial contribution to the Centre.

We fully agree with the delegation of Peru that the Centre should actively promote academic and governmental interaction through the exchange of information, the generation of various currents of opinion, the strengthening of international agreements and the prevention of conflict.

Undoubtedly, in general terms, there is a vacuum, or at least a harmful lack, of knowledge about the conceptual elements that contribute to the legal content of the international system. Within that framework, greater familiarity with international law, as well as relevant discussions and evaluations of that law based on the achievement of political and diplomatic objectives, could have a positive and concrete impact on the establishment of peace and world stability.

The work of the Centre to that fundamental end should focus on the key tasks of elaborating and disseminating norms that will make possible a world characterized by certainties rather than risks, which have taken on new dimensions as regards both form and substance.

In this connection, we cannot disregard the fact that, as human beings should be the focus of our attention, the work carried out in the Lima Centre should thus also consider issues that threaten the dignity of people. In other words, we must make a serious and sustained effort to promote a climate that is increasingly conducive to lasting peace and security and that will extend to both present and future generations.

We therefore believe it would be both useful and desirable to define preventive strategies as well as strategies for preventive disarmament, in order to convey to Governments guidelines that would more effectively mitigate the conflict, tension, suspicion and resentment that still characterize international relations.

From the academic point of view, we should therefore promote greater awareness of the principles that inspire international humanitarian law — for example, in order to preserve values that are essential for the survival of our countries. Bearing in mind that this Centre is part of the United Nations system, since it was created by a resolution of the Organization, we believe the United Nations should devote particular attention to preparations for the convening as soon as possible of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We should also consider the proposals for a "new agenda" as one of the items on its agenda, bearing in mind that the mere possession of nuclear weapons constitutes a threat to international peace and security and a possible violation of Article 2, paragraph 4, of the United Nations Charter.

At the same time, we believe that the time has come to give content and substance to all issues related to disarmament and development and to undertake a practical study on the subject of peace dividends.

We believe that our region is well qualified to request that the rest of the international community respond to the concerns we have expressed on this matter. Latin America is today a nuclear-free zone of peace, free of all types of weapons of mass destruction. We therefore urge with great firmness, coupled with the appropriate restraint, that this type of initiative be translated into real action and receive a positive response from Governments.

Finally, we should like to state that we are fully prepared to carry out an in-depth discussion of these matters, so that this presentation will not represent a merely rhetorical statement.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation has the honour to introduce to the Committee the draft resolution in document A/C.1/54/L.43*, dated 27 October 1999, entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*". We are pleased to announce that this draft resolution is being sponsored by the following delegations: Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Colombia, the Congo, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, the Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Samoa, San Marino, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe. The Islamic Republic of Iran and Sierra Leone have also become sponsors of the draft resolution. My delegation wishes to express its sincere appreciation to all these sponsors.

The draft resolution is basically similar to the one presented last year, with minor amendments of a technical nature. Its 14 preambular and four operative paragraphs are virtually identical with resolution 53/77 W of 4 December 1998. For the sake of brevity, I will focus only on its operative paragraphs.

Operative paragraph 1 once again underlines the unanimous conclusion of the advisory opinion of the

International Court of Justice that "there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control".

Operative paragraph 2 calls once again upon all States immediately to fulfil that obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations in the year 2000 leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons and providing for their elimination.

Operative paragraph 3 requests all States to inform the Secretary-General of the efforts and measures they have taken on the implementation of the present resolution and nuclear disarmament, and requests the Secretary-General to apprise the General Assembly of that information at its fifty-fifth session.

Operative paragraph 4 decides to include the issue in the provisional agenda of the fifty-fifth session.

It is clear from the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice that States have a legal obligation not only to pursue such negotiations but also to bring them to an early conclusion. This is consistent with the solemn obligation made by States Parties under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament and to pursue determinedly systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of the elimination of those weapons. The sponsors of the draft resolution consider this unanimous opinion of the World Court on the existence of that obligation to constitute a clear basis for follow-up actions by Member States of the United Nations in their determined efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

In submitting this draft resolution, allow me to reiterate some points I mentioned last year in response to comments made by a few delegations that spoke against the initiation of last year's resolution, and that may do so again this year, as well as to raise a few additional points.

It has been alleged that the draft resolution's call for multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention is unrealistic and lacks credibility. Let me clarify: the draft resolution calls on States to commence multilateral negotiations leading to — I repeat, leading to — an early conclusion of a convention; it does not talk in terms of commencing immediate negotiations on a convention. It thereby allows for precisely the kinds of disarmament measures that the nuclear-weapon States themselves are committed to support. Therefore, the approach called for by the draft resolution is not unrealistic; it is in fact compatible with the incremental approaches mooted by others.

We are aware that negotiations on disarmament need to move forward in a progressive fashion. We commend the approaches taken by some countries towards this end outside of the Conference on Disarmament, either through bilateral agreements or arrangements or through unilateral decisions. However, we cannot but express disappointment at the lack of progress in these endeavours: six years after its signing, the START II has yet to be put into effect owing to its non-ratification, while decisions by some States not to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and its non-ratification thus far by three major nuclear-weapon States, have prevented its entry into force.

While my delegation recognizes the importance and continuing relevance of bilateral negotiations and unilateral decisions, these should not detract from the importance of multilateral negotiations. Indeed, the two tracks could complement and reinforce each other; nuclear disarmament is a matter of concern to all humanity, not just to nuclear-weapon States.

Concerning the draft resolution's "selective quotation" from the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion, my delegation readily admits that the draft resolution focuses on the unanimous opinion as regards the existence of an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, under strict and effective international control. It does so in order not to confuse the two main conclusions — that is, the threat and use of nuclear weapons and the obligation to negotiate disarmament — as these require different responses.

The draft resolution, as reflected in operative paragraph 1, focuses on the disarmament obligations of States, as this was a conclusion arrived at unanimously by the International Court of Justice. Its implementation is entirely appropriate for the General Assembly, which has a mandate to promote disarmament negotiations. The sponsors of the draft resolution recognize the value of the Court's decision as a whole. The draft resolution does not pretend that operative paragraph 1 is the only conclusion of the Court that could have an influence on disarmament

policy or that there are no other actions which could be taken in the light of the Court's decisions.

In fact, operative paragraph 3 encompasses the Court's decision as a whole, requesting States to inform the Secretary-General of the efforts and measures they have taken to fulfil their duties as underlined by the conclusions of the Court.

The contention that the draft resolution relieves non-nuclear-weapon States of any disarmament responsibility does not hold water. It calls upon all States to fulfil the obligation to negotiate nuclear disarmament; it does not single out nuclear-weapon States only. A further contention was that the draft resolution removed the obligation under article VI of the NPT in relation to general and complete disarmament. The Court, in arriving at its conclusion, relied on international law, of which the NPT obligation contained in article VI is part, as well as other disarmament and customary law. The Court's conclusion that there is an obligation to negotiate nuclear disarmament made no linkage between such an obligation and general and complete disarmament. Neither does the NPT make a direct link; it merely states that there is an obligation to do both.

The Court, in arriving at its unanimous decision that Member States have an obligation not only to conduct but also successfully to conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament, reiterates the obligation of States parties to the NPT. The unanimous decision of the International Court of Justice, representing the full weight of the legal opinion of all members of the World Court, is an important contribution to the development of international law which should not be summarily dismissed.

The fact that nuclear-weapon States have ignored this unanimous opinion and failed to pursue multilateral negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament can only have a negative impact on the NPT Review Conference and the nuclear disarmament process in general. If the situation persists, Member States of this Organization, in their desire to see full compliance with the provisions of the NPT, may wish to seek a further opinion from the World Court in relation to the non-observance in good faith by the nuclear-weapon States of their obligations pursuant to article VI.

As regards the draft resolution's silence on the Court's conclusion that there was not, in international law, a prohibition against the threat or use of nuclear weapons, one delegation made the point last year, which my delegation would like to reiterate, that the Court did conclude that the threat or use of nuclear weapons was generally illegal and that it is incorrect to say that it allowed for an exception. The Court rejected the argument that there would be legal uses of nuclear weapons and said that it could reach no definitive position regarding extreme circumstances. Further, it stated that "States must never make civilians the object of attack and must consequently never use weapons that are incapable of distinguishing between civilian and military targets." (*A/51/218, annex, para. 78*)

In submitting the draft resolution for consideration by this Committee, my delegation is confident that it will continue to receive the support of a large majority of Member States. We are confident that States which support multilateral negotiations that will eventually lead to the global elimination of nuclear weapons, to which we are all committed, will have no valid reason to oppose this draft resolution, which seeks to do exactly that in the long term. Once again, in introducing this draft resolution my delegation expresses its sincere appreciation to the sponsors, as well as to the delegations that will vote in its favour.

Mr. Moura (Brazil): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.34, entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", on behalf of the following sponsors: Angola, Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, the Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Zambia.

This is the fourth consecutive year that Brazil has presented a draft resolution on this important matter. We are glad that this initiative won increased support last year, when resolution 53/77 Q was adopted with 154 votes in favour. It is our hope that the draft resolution this year may enjoy even broader support.

I would remind this Committee that last year's resolution took into account questions relating to rights of navigation through maritime space. The draft resolution before us is almost identical to last year's. The only addition is the introduction, as a second preambular paragraph, of a reference to the text entitled "Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned", adopted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission last May.

In the field of nuclear disarmament, one of the most significant developments of recent decades is that the nuclear option has already been ruled out in several parts of the world.

The areas of application of the regional treaties, plus the Antarctic Treaty, contribute to freeing from nuclear weapons the southern hemisphere and adjacent areas north of the Equator where these treaties apply. The States parties to those treaties, in close consultation with their neighbours, have renounced the acquisition of nuclear weapons and accepted stringent verification commitments to that effect.

Our initiative aims to achieve recognition by the General Assembly, for the fourth consecutive year, of the progressive emergence of a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas. Such recognition should be considered a confirmation of the commitments of the international community towards non-proliferation and disarmament.

This draft resolution does not create new legal obligations. It does not contradict any norms of international law applicable to ocean space, such as those contained in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. It aims to recall the need to respect existing commitments under nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties and their protocols, to call upon States that have not yet done so to move towards ratification of such treaties and protocols and to call upon all States to consider further proposals for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

We are convinced that the promotion of the idea that most of the globe become nuclear-weapon-free provides further impetus to the process of nuclear disarmament and to the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

We wish, finally, to put on record our appreciation to all those who voted in favour of resolution 53/77 Q last year. We expect to continue deserving their support. The number of positive votes has grown since this initiative was first launched in 1995. On behalf of all its sponsors, I express our sincere hope that all States that support nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament will vote in favour of this draft resolution.

Mr. Than (Myanmar): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.41, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", on behalf of the following sponsors: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Colombia, the Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Swaziland, Thailand, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia and my own delegation.

This is our traditional draft resolution, which we first submitted at the Golden Jubilee session of the General Assembly, in 1995. This year marks the fifth year we are presenting such a draft resolution.

Right from the beginning, our draft resolution has reflected the majority views of the non-aligned countries, which form nearly two thirds of the membership of the United Nations. It enjoys their overwhelming support, and it also has a large number of sponsors from the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). It is not a formal NAM draft resolution, however.

It is significant that this year the 10 countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have taken the lead in submitting this draft resolution, which has given it added impetus. Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.41 has therefore emerged as the draft resolution of the ASEAN 10 and a large number of NAM countries, reflecting the majority views of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The substance of our draft resolution this year has a further significant aspect. The development of our text has been an evolutionary process. Taking into account suggestions and advice from its sponsors, we have made our draft resolution more flexible and realistic by dropping some rigid elements from its operative paragraphs. A/C.1/54/L.41 now projects a realistic vision of nuclear disarmament.

In its operative paragraphs the draft resolution, *inter alia*, urges the nuclear-weapon States to stop immediately the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems; also urges the nuclear-weapon States, as an interim measure, to de-alert and de-activate their nuclear weapons immediately; calls for the conclusion, as a first step, of a universal and legally binding multilateral agreement committing States to the process of nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons; calls upon the nuclear-weapon States, pending the achievement of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, to agree on an internationally and legally binding instrument of the joint undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons; calls upon all States to conclude an internationally and legally binding instrument on security assurances of non-use and non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States; urges the nuclear-weapon States to commence plurilateral negotiations among themselves at an appropriate stage on further deep reductions of nuclear weapons as an effective measure of nuclear disarmament; welcomes the establishment in the Conference on Disarmament in 1998 of the Ad Hoc Committee on the prohibition of the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices; urges a speedy conclusion of a universal and non-discriminatory convention thereon; and reiterates its call upon the Conference on Disarmament to establish, on a priority basis, an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, to commence negotiations early in 2000 on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

In short, the main thrust of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.41 is the proposal for a phased programme of nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons with a view to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free world. It also contains proposals for systematic and step-by-step practical nuclear disarmament measures, as I have outlined above.

Since the advent of our draft resolution on nuclear disarmament in the General Assembly in 1995, there has been a significant groundswell of international support for nuclear disarmament. Now, the central theme of discussions in international forums — be it the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament or the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conferences and Preparatory Committee meetings — is the question of nuclear disarmament. International clamour for effective measures of nuclear disarmament is broadly based and growing in strength. This involves not only States but also non-governmental organizations and individual groups.

The advisory opinion of 8 July 1996 of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons* was a welcome development. The report of the Canberra Commission in 1996 has made valuable contributions to international efforts for nuclear disarmament. So has the Report of the Tokyo Forum this year. These international efforts towards nuclear disarmament are gaining momentum. Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.41 has a part to play in those efforts, providing them an impetus in its own humble way.

For these reasons, I should like to request the member States of this Committee to accord overwhelming support to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.41.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): I wish to speak on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.41, introduced a few moments ago by the Ambassador of Myanmar. Before proceeding, however, I should like to take this opportunity to complement you, Mr. Chairman, and your Bureau on your stewardship of this Committee to date and to assure you of my delegation's continued support.

With reference to the draft resolution at hand, I am pleased to be able to say that Bangladesh endorses its content, for a variety of reasons. My country has impeccable non-proliferation credentials. We are party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a signatory to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Comprehensive disarmament is a goal that is incorporated in our Constitution. In order to further stability in the region and in the world, we have consistently urged restraint and calm in the nuclear arena. We believe this draft resolution contains elements and aspirations that will help us achieve our aims.

Nuclear weapons remain the principal threat to humankind. Their elimination must therefore quite rationally form an essential feature of our future endeavours. While for us this constitutes the main plank of the Group of 21's thinking, there is a modicum of intellectual empathy from other groups towards this idea.

The problem in this, as in most negotiations, is to find common ground in the approach to what [illegible] common goal. We ourselves believe that the best methodology would be the establishment of an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament. As pragmatists, we are of course prepared to continue to discuss the subject in order to arrive at the desired consensus, which would accommodate the perceived national self-interest of the broadest range of Member States.

Pragmatism also dictates that the nuclear haves must behave in consonance with the dictum that example is better than precept. Simply to seek to chide or reprimand those that follow suit is not to speak from high moral ground. Anything that can remotely be vulnerable to the accusation of technological imperialism is best avoided. Those who totally ignored the criticism of discrimination in relation to the NPT obviously did so, as is now evident, at some peril to its cause.

Our purposes can be achieved only if we are able to work together in a spirit of harmony and cooperation. Bangladesh believes the draft resolution charts our future path in a balanced and rational manner. We would commend it to the Committee for the widest possible measure of support.

Mr. Marsono (Indonesia): On behalf of the Indonesian delegation, I would like to take this opportunity to express our support for the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament", contained in A/C.1/54/L.41, submitted by Myanmar and sponsored and supported by a vast number of other Member States.

This once again reaffirms Indonesia's long-standing commitment to the cause of global non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament and reflects the determined will of a majority of the international community in their quest for a world without the menace posed by nuclear weapons.

The Indonesian delegation also wishes to concur with the position of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which has reaffirmed the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament. Furthermore, in concordance with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, there exists an obligation for the international community to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

In this regard, Indonesia would like to call for the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament to commence negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time-frame. With the new millennium fast approaching, support for this draft resolution will be another welcome measure to invigorate the resolve of the international community in the relentless pursuit of achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Santos (Mozambique): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member States of Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and my own country, Mozambique. On behalf of SADC and on my own behalf, I should like to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee and on the excellent manner in which you, along with the other members of the Bureau, are conducting the affairs of the Committee. Allow me to pay a special tribute to your predecessor, Mr. André Mernier of Belgium, for the excellent work he did last year as Chairman. His guidance and wisdom remain in our memories.

The general debate on disarmament issues last week singled out individual items within the broad scope of the subject. Therefore, on behalf of SADC, I would like to take this opportunity to underscore the issue of conventional arms, particularly in the categories of small arms, light weapons and anti-personnel mines.

The SADC countries are concerned at the use of small arms, which results in human tragedy and violent conflicts all over the world, particularly in Africa. Within our region, unimpeded access to and use of light weapons and small arms have increased the lethality of crime, violence, banditry and civil disobedience. The demobilization of ex-combatants and the implementation of disarmament programmes are constrained by the widespread existence of poorly regulated and indiscriminately used light weapons and small arms.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the subregion is a product of both past and current demand for arms intended for political, security or criminal purposes. Hence, strategies for control and reduction must necessarily be multifaceted. They must both reduce local demand and strengthen controls over existing legal and illegal stocks in the subregion, as well as preventing new illicit inflows.

The diffusion of existing stocks and the import of new weapons endanger the democratic activities which are being consolidated in the region and negatively affect the ability of Governments to govern. Thus far, various initiatives have been taken in the region. Joint police operations between Mozambique and South Africa, known as Operation Rachel, started in 1995 and by 1998 had destroyed more than 450 tons of arms and ammunition, including a substantial amount of unexploded ordnance. Further operations will be necessary in the future, as a substantial number of caches have already been located.

In addition to the bilateral measures cited above, the nineteenth session of the SADC Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (ISDSC), held in Lusaka in November 1997, established an ad hoc committee on cross-border crime, under the chairmanship of Zimbabwe. That committee was mandated to recommend ways and means by which loopholes in SADC States' border control mechanisms could be plugged to control the growing illicit trade in small arms and other crimes of a transnational nature, including, *inter alia,* car smuggling, drug trafficking and money laundering.

Furthermore, regional arrangements for combating illicit arms trafficking and other related crimes have also been put in place. This includes national agreements for cooperation and law enforcement, which culminated in the creation in 1995 of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (SARPCCO). The objective of SARPCCO is to promote and engage in regional cooperation for the management of all forms of cross border and related crimes. These include, among other things, dissemination of information between member States, review of joint crime management strategies, formulation of regional police training policies and strategies and planning and undertaking joint operations.

In 1998, SADC, in cooperation with the European Union (EU), also elaborated an action programme on light weapons and illicit arms trafficking. The first steps for the implementation of this action programme are well advanced. Indeed, the Council of Ministers, meeting during the last SADC annual Summit, decided, *inter alia*,,to create a working group whose task will be to work out a regional policy on small arms to make possible the implementation of regional programmes.

SADC welcomes the decision of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on small arms adopted at the Algiers summit. It also welcomes the second workshop on illicit trafficking of small arms in Togo, hosted by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament, as well as Kenya's intention to host a regional meeting on small arms.

The establishment of a preparatory committee for the international conference on the illicit arms trade in all its aspects, to be held not later then 2001, which will draw its mandate from the draft resolution to be adopted during the current session of the General Assembly, will have a lot of work to do to facilitate deliberations at the conference.

It is very important that all Members of the United Nations, particularly those Members affected by the problem of small arms, participate both in the preparatory committee and the conference. It is also our view that the chairmanship of the preparatory committee should be held by one of the most affected States.

Another issue of great concern to SADC member States, and I believe to all of us here in this Committee, is the issue of anti-personnel mines. Because SADC accords high priority to dealing with the scourge of anti-personnel mines, the Community has established a Mine Action Committee to coordinate mine action in the region, as well as the steps towards implementation and compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

The commitment by the international community to put an end to the scourge of landmines, contained in the Maputo Declaration, is of paramount importance. Let us enhance our efforts to sustain the momentum, especially because the most difficult phase of the whole process — that of implementation - still lies ahead. In other words, consolidation of the progress made so far and achievement of the ambitious and well-intentioned goal of completely eliminating landmines can be realized only if the Convention becomes universal.

To achieve these goals, the Southern African Development Community believes that States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, as well as the international community as a whole, should maintain the current momentum of the process by calling upon the Second Meeting of State Parties to the Convention, to be held next year, to consider practical issues relating to the implementation of the Convention; should provide complete and timely information, as required in article 7 of the Convention, in order to promote transparency and compliance with the Convention; and should support and advance the care, rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of landmine victims in the countries in need.

Before concluding, I should like on behalf of the Government of Mozambique once again to express our most sincere appreciation to all States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel mines and on Their Destruction for making the First Meeting of States Parties, held last May in Maputo, a starting point towards the total elimination of landmines. As President Chissano underlined, "Four years for doing away with the stockpiles of anti-personnel mines in our countries and 10 years for completing the demining process [are] targets that cannot be negotiated for all the States parties to the Convention. What is negotiable, though, is the ways and means for their implementation".

Finally, I should like to emphasize that national, regional and international efforts aimed at curbing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the prohibition of the use, stockpiling and trafficking of land mines can be successful only with international assistance and cooperation. Therefore, SADC would like to appeal to the international community to spare no effort in providing the required assistance to all countries, especially those in need. On our part, we shall remain committed to and engaged in the goals and objectives collectively established.

Ms. Arce de Jeannet (Mexico) *(spoke in Spanish)*: It is an honour for the Mexican delegation to present this statement on behalf of the member States of the Rio Group on the subject of small arms.

It has been stated that one of the consequences of the end of the cold war has been the recycling of enormous amounts of small arms and light weapons. Massive flows of such arms have exacerbated internal conflicts and increased crime and its dangers, particularly as regards organized crime. We have also been able to detect an increase in the illegal production of such weapons for delivery to many users.

Our region has become aware of the urgent need to block, combat and eliminate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, ammunition, explosives and other related material owing to the harmful effects of these activities on the security of individual States and the region as a whole; they endanger the well-being of our peoples, their social and economic development and their right to live in peace.

The progress we have made thus far has been recognized at the international level. The Declaration on the collection of illicit arms in the hands of Central American civilians, adopted by the countries of the Central American isthmus in January 1997, the Bridgetown Declaration of Principles, signed in May 1997 by the leaders of the Caribbean, and the entry into force in July 1998 of the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials have laid the bases for confronting this problem from two perspectives: that of combating crime and that of preventing and reducing excessive and destabilizing accumulations of small arms and light weapons.

We are convinced that regional efforts are not sufficient in this field, which requires international cooperation with full respect for the principles of sovereignty, non-intervention and the juridical equality of States.

We agree with the view of the Security Council, which highlighted that the prevention of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons is a priority for the international community and accorded great importance to cooperation in dealing with the issue.

We consider that the United Nations must strengthen its activities in this area, particularly in the framework of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA), as the focal point to coordinate all actions of the United Nations system in the area of small arms and light weapons in all their aspects.

In this respect, we express our deepest appreciation to the Department for Disarmament Affairs for organizing, together with the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the international workshop entitled "Illicit trafficking in small arms", held in June of this year in Lima, Peru, which gave special attention to the problems in our region.

The members of the Rio Group support holding an international conference on illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons in the year 2001. This will provide the international community with the opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to combating the illegal manufacture of and trafficking in this type of arms and to preventing and reducing excessive, destabilizing stockpiling of these weapons.

We believe that the preparatory process will ensure the success of the conference. We therefore believe that the preparatory committee should examine topics related to procedure and should prepare a draft programme of action containing measures for the Member States of the United Nations, as well as actions to be carried out at the regional and international levels and measures that should be implemented by the United Nations.

The recommendations of the Group of Experts on Small Arms should be taken into account in preparing that programme of action, since they contain new proposals in this field. Both the conference and the preparatory committee should meet in a place that will allow for ample participation by Member States, because the problem of small arms and light weapons has a global dimension.

Mr. Kambire (Burkina Faso) *(spoke in French)*: On behalf of the African Group, I have the honour to introduce three draft resolutions, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa" (A/C.1/53/L.10), "The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)" (A/C.1/54/L.17) and "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes" (A/C.1/54/L.6).

The first draft resolution, "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa", does not differ essentially from the text of resolution 53/78 C, adopted by the General Assembly on 4 December 1998. The only changes that have been made derive from the decision adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at its thirty-fifth session, held in Algiers from 12-14 July 1999.

Thus, operative paragraph 3 appeals to all States, as well as to the international community, to make voluntary financial contributions in order to enable the Regional Centre to fulfil its mandate to the fullest possible extent and to carry out smoothly its activities. In that framework, I should like to welcome the decision of the Secretary-General, in implementation of General Assembly resolution 52/220, to appoint Mr. Ivor Richard Fung, a national of Cameroon, as Director of the Centre; he is carrying out his duties very effectively.

The second draft resolution is entitled "The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)". The text is identical to the one adopted at the fifty-second session of the General Assembly in resolution 52/46 of 9 December 1997.

A small number of changes have been introduced in operative paragraphs 4 and 5. Paragraph 4 calls upon the African States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that have not yet done so to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) pursuant to the Treaty, thereby satisfying the requirements of article 9 (b) and annex II to the Treaty of Pelindaba when it enters into force. Those States are also invited to conclude additional protocols to their safeguards agreements on the basis of the Model Protocol approved by the IAEA Board of Governors on 15 May 1997.

Operative paragraph 5 expresses gratitude to the United Nations Secretary-General, the Secretary-General of the OAU and the Director General of the IAEA for the diligence with which they have rendered effective assistance to the signatories of the Treaty since 11 April 1996.

Turning to the third draft resolution, entitled "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes", the only new factor is the wish expressed that this text be examined every other year.

However, it is desirable that the General Assembly call upon all States to take the necessary measures to prevent the dumping of nuclear wastes that would adversely affect national security. Furthermore, the draft resolution takes note of resolution CM/Res. 1356 (LIV), adopted in 1991 by the Council of Ministers of the OAU, on the Bamako Convention on the Ban on the Import of Hazardous Wastes into Africa and on the Control of their Transboundary Movements within Africa.

The three draft resolutions that I have introduced have been the subject of broad agreement. African States are convinced that they will enjoy wide support and will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Amehou (Benin) *(spoke in French)*: My delegation would once again like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee and to say that we greatly appreciate the manner in which you have directed our discussions.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to share with all those in this Committee its viewpoints and concerns on the subject of small arms and light weapons and illicit trafficking in these items. Since the end of the cold war, the world has been witnessing a new type of conflict, for which third world countries are generally the theatre. I am referring to conflicts within States — in which armed groups, such as rebels or separatists, fight each other or fight against established powers — which are to some extent replacing conflicts among States.

Most of these conflicts result from underdevelopment that engenders poverty, which causes yesterday's brothers, neighbours and ethnic groups, who had always lived in peace, to turn against one another. Frictions among these various entities that could in the past have been settled with a minimum of conflict have since the beginning of the 1990s, unfortunately, found circumstances propitious to their development.

Indeed, illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons has in recent years grown exponentially. These small arms have undergone continuous technical improvements, making them easier to use. Yet even though they are light, small arms are nevertheless lethal and devastating.

These weapons have caused unimaginable ravages in the countries of Africa, and in my own subregion of West Africa in particular. Armed groups have challenged democratically elected regimes and have overcome them through the force of arms, and non-combatant civilian populations have been pillaged and decimated. Illicit trafficking in these weapons has promoted the emergence of groups of bandits and outlaws, which spread fear and desolation in towns and villages.

Mr. Seibert (Germany), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

Entire districts are criss-crossed by such armed groups at night, while public authorities remain powerless to act because they generally have less firepower than do these armed groups. Despite the actions that Governments have taken, they cannot control the circulation of these weapons with which their producers and traffickers are flooding our countries, whose borders are, unfortunately, still porous.

Organized and armed bands rob and kill travellers in inter-urban buses by day and by night. How can we imagine that development could take place in a country whose inhabitants, fearing to fall into the hands of bandits, can no longer tend to their affairs, trade or go out to work in the fields? The ease with which these weapons can be used also means that armed groups may recruit children, whom they then teach to use these engines of death.

As the Committee can see, illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons has in my subregion become a phenomenon of great importance with very negative repercussions on society and development. That is why my Government greatly appreciates the importance the international community has for some time attached to small arms and light weapons, even though nuclear weapons still remain the main issue haunting humanity.

I should therefore like to convey my Government's great appreciation to those delegations whose Governments have been unsparing in their efforts to wage a merciless war against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The Government of my country played a very active role in the work of the Economic Community of the West African States (ECOWAS) in order to bring about the Moratorium on the Import, Export and Manufacturing of Small Arms in West Africa, signed in Abuja, Nigeria, on 31 October 1998.

My delegation would like to reiterate its congratulations on similar initiatives taken by countries on the American continent and express its hope that similar actions will be taken in other parts of the world. In the framework of practical disarmament measures, the international community should come to the assistance of countries struggling against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in order to assist in their collection and destruction.

The aspect of training customs officials and public security forces is also very important. Only concerted international action can appreciably curb the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. In this connection, my country welcomes the decision taken by the United Nations, under the terms of resolution 53/77 E of 4 December 1998, to organize in the year 2001 an international conference on this topic. My delegation hopes that attendance at that conference will be at a high level and that the countries of the third world that are the most affected by illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons will be able to participate fully.

Mr. Salander (Sweden): On behalf of some 50 sponsoring delegations and my own delegation, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.52, on the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

My delegation appreciates the cooperation and support of such a great number of sponsoring delegations in the elaboration of this draft resolution. With the permission of the Chair, and for the sake of brevity, I shall refrain from reading out their names.

The 1980 Convention consists of a framework Convention and four annexed Protocols. Protocol I deals with invisible fragments. The revised Protocol II concerns landmines, booby traps and other devices. The subject of Protocol III is incendiary weapons. The last addition is Protocol IV, dealing with blinding laser weapons.

The Convention and its Protocols constitute an essential and integral part of international law applicable to armed conflict. The shocking involvement of civilians in armed conflict is ample reason for us all to intensify our efforts to have the Convention and its Protocols fully implemented. Their purpose is to place constraints on the conduct of war by restricting or prohibiting the use of certain conventional weapons.

When implemented, the rules contained in the Protocols will limit the risks to civilians as well as to combatants. Lives will be saved, and suffering, it is hoped, reduced. We therefore urgently call upon all States that have not yet done so to take all measures to become parties to the Convention and its Protocols as soon as possible.

The Convention offers a framework within which negotiations may gradually refine or expand the areas covered. The last Review Conference, in 1995-1996, provided such an opportunity, and the High Contracting Parties succeeded in strengthening Protocol II, as well as adopting a new Protocol IV on blinding laser weapons. We are very pleased that both these instruments have now entered into force.

The draft resolution before the Committee reflects these positive developments. Under the revised Protocol II, the parties will meet annually to consult and cooperate on all issues related to the operation of the Protocol. The first of these meetings will take place in Geneva on December 15-17 of this year, under Swedish chairmanship. We are looking forward to a fruitful exchange of views during that meeting and encourage the widest possible participation from States parties and States not parties to the Protocol, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross and interested non-governmental organizations.

The draft resolution also addresses the issue of convening the next Review Conference not later than 2001. We hope that Conference will be used to strengthen further the protection against unnecessary suffering that can be offered to those afflicted by armed conflicts.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.52 intends to promote the universality of this very important body of international humanitarian law. On behalf of all its sponsors, I should like to express our hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus, as was the case last year.

Mr. Sanders (Netherlands): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to Sweden for introducing the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.52, on the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, generally known as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

The Netherlands fully supports that draft resolution. In previous years as well, our delegation has spoken in support of the draft resolution submitted by Sweden on conventional weapons, because of the importance the Netherlands attaches to this body of international law, applicable in armed conflict.

The Convention and its Protocols help reduce the suffering of combatants and of civilians in armed conflicts by setting fundamental rules of international humanitarian law that provide for the protection of non-combatants and prohibit the indiscriminate use of weapons. No effort should be spared to advocate the norms of behaviour that have been set by the Convention and its Protocols and to promote universal adherence to them.

It is therefore appropriate for the General Assembly, as proposed in the draft resolution submitted by Sweden, to call upon those States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention and its Protocols as soon as possible.

Earlier this year, the Netherlands gave its consent to be bound by the amended Protocol II, on mines, and by Protocol IV, on blinding laser weapons. My delegation also welcomes the convening of the first annual conference of High Contracting Parties to the amended Protocol II, in December of this year, and supports the setting in motion of the preparatory process for the second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, to be convened no later than 2001. Through these conferences, the international community should further develop and strengthen these legal instruments.

My delegation would also like to call on the parties to the amended Protocol II to ensure timely submission to the first annual conference of their national report on implementation of the Protocol. To facilitate reporting at this stage, the Preparatory Committee of the conference encouraged parties to make use of the draft reporting format for their national reports. This was distributed by the Preparatory Committee pending adoption of a format by the conference in December.

As recommended by the Preparatory Committee, the European Union member States have decided to use that draft reporting format this year. The Netherlands has already submitted its national report according to this format.

I should like to conclude by expressing the wish that this important draft resolution be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36, entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", on behalf of the delegations of Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Colombia, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Fiji, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, the Sudan, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam and my own delegation.

In introducing this draft resolution, allow me to dwell a moment on its historical evolution. The call for security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons must be viewed in the correct perspective. Most importantly, that demand is based on the fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter that States, in their international relations, must refrain from the use or threat of use of force.

That obligation applies to the use or threat of use of force with all kinds of weapons. Had the drafters of the Charter been aware of the existence of nuclear weapons, they would no doubt have specifically included a prohibition of their use. In fact, the General Assembly, in the very first resolution it adopted, affirmed the need to outlaw nuclear weapons. Thus, the fundamental obligation not to use or threaten the use of nuclear weapons, being based on the Charter's prohibition of the use or threat of use of force, cannot be conditioned, qualified or restricted in any way.

Unfortunately, this obligation was not expressly and legally affirmed by the first, second or third nuclear-weapon State, and perhaps this was so because the Charter's adoption and the dawn of the nuclear era were soon followed by the outbreak of the cold war.

When the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was being negotiated, the non-nuclear States pointed out that as long as nuclear weapons were possessed by a few and non-nuclear-weapon States were asked not to acquire them, the former should provide credible and binding guarantees that they would not use or threaten the use of nuclear weapons against the latter and, secondly, that they would come to the assistance of any non-nuclear-weapon State which was threatened with nuclear weapons, in accordance with article 51 of the Charter, on individual and collective self-defence.

The response by the nuclear Powers to these reasonable expectations was dismal; in hindsight, this has been the source of much of the nuclear danger that we confront today. Such security guarantees were not written into the NPT, nor into a protocol, as was suggested by some non-nuclear-weapon States. The Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, convened in Geneva in 1968 at Pakistan's initiative, was prevented by the NPT's main sponsors, present as observers, from reaching a consensus in favour of the demand for unconditional and binding positive and negative security assurances.

The security assurances offered by the three nuclear-weapon States under Security Council resolution 255 (1968) were partial, and ultimately dependent on the unlikely existence of a consensus for action among the Council's permanent members. In 1979, various unilateral statements offering negative security assurances were made by the nuclear Powers. While noting the unilateral statements made by those Powers at the first special session devoted to disarmament, the Final Document called for the conclusion of an international instrument by the Conference on Disarmament. Unfortunately, despite the passage of over 21 years, the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to conclude such an international agreement.

During the cold war, the Conference on Disarmament could not evolve a common formula for the offer of unconditional and credible assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States. Four of the five nuclear-weapon Powers offered only partial and restricted assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. One side excluded any non-nuclear-weapon State which was a member of a military alliance with a nuclear-weapon State. The other side excluded those non-nuclear-weapon States that had nuclear weapons on their territories. All four of those nuclear Powers excluded non-nuclear-weapon States that were not parties to the NPT. Only one nuclear-weapon State — China — offered unconditional and unrestricted assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

There was considerable hope that with the end of the cold war, the nuclear-weapon States would be able readily to agree to offer categorical, unconditional and binding negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States. Unfortunately, most of the nuclear-weapon States proceeded in the opposite direction.

First, through means fair and foul, they secured the indefinite extension of the NPT, without offering any tangible assurance to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or a clear commitment to a definite process of nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons. Security Council resolution 984 (1995) of the Security Council was even more limited in scope and credibility than its predecessor, resolution 255 (1968).

Secondly, soon after the NPT's indefinite extension, some nuclear Powers asserted the right to retain their nuclear weapons indefinitely. They announced new programmes to maintain and improve their nuclear arsenals — for example, through the stockpile stewardship programme.

Next, statements were made reserving the right to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States — even those which are party to the NPT or to nuclear-weapon-free zones — in case those States used or threatened to use other weapons of mass destruction. This represented a significant erosion of even the limited assurances contained in Security Council resolutions 255 (1968) and 984 (1995).

During the last year, a further erosion took place when the Western alliance announced a new doctrine which envisages the out-of-area use of force. This possibility of nuclear use against non-nuclear-weapon States was further intensified by the expansion of this nuclear alliance and confirmation of arrangements for nuclear sharing with non-nuclear-weapon States members of this alliance.

In parentheses, and speaking for Pakistan, let me add another element. The spread of nuclear weapons to South Asia and elsewhere has added to the possibility of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Within the South Asian region, the danger arises from the imbalance in conventional forces and the existence of outstanding conflicts and disputes, especially the Kashmir dispute.

This danger has been illustrated and heightened by the draft nuclear doctrine announced by our neighbour, which — imbibing the cold-war theology of nuclear deterrence — envisages the operational deployment of a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons on land, on the sea and in the air.

As Pakistan stated in this Committee on 20 October, in the new environment created by South Asia's nuclearization, the Conference on Disarmament's task of evolving an agreed approach on negative security assurances has become more challenging and urgent. We also declared, "We are prepared to extend appropriate assurances, if desired by the regional States, to respect the nuclear-weapon-free status of various nuclear-weapon-free zones, such as in Latin America, Africa and South-East Asia." (*A/C.1/54/PV.12*)

One question that arises is, should the new nuclear Powers in South Asia or elsewhere be required to offer negative security assurances? If this is not politically feasible at present, are there other ways to achieve the same objective — for example, through the concept of a strategic restraint regime in South Asia?

The sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.36 believe that the Conference on Disarmament has an important and vital task to reverse the progressively negative trends regarding the possible use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The call in draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36 for effective international arrangements is thus even more urgent and important today than in the past.

The achievement of an unconditional and legally binding commitment by all nuclear-weapon States not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State would have the following positive effects. First, it would reduce the danger of the use of nuclear weapons. Secondly, it could constitute an important confidence-building measure among non-nuclear-weapon States. Thirdly, it would provide greater credibility to attempts to halt nuclear proliferation. Fourthly, it would facilitate the process of nuclear disarmament and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons and thus represent a first step towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The sponsors trust that the Conference on Disarmament will re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances in early 2000 and make rapid progress towards reaching the vital objectives set out in this draft resolution.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): I have asked to speak today to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Small arms", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.42, on behalf of the following sponsors: Australia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mexico, Mozambique, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Niger, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, San Marino, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Zambia and my own country, Japan.

Japan introduced a draft resolution on small arms for the first time in 1995. Since then, the awareness of Member States as well as non-governmental organizations of the problems concerning small arms has grown remarkably. There are now many initiatives being taken and activities being carried out at the international, regional and national levels to tackle the issue of small arms. Japan welcomes such developments and is also pleased to see that the United Nations has actively been engaged in this issue.

In particular, in response to the resolution adopted in 1995, and with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts chaired by Ambassador Donowaki, the Secretary-General submitted his first report on small arms to the General Assembly in 1997. This year, as was requested by General Assembly resolution 52/38 J in 1997, he submitted another report (A/54/258) on small arms to the General Assembly. The content of the report has already been introduced by Ambassador Donowaki, on 19 October. The draft resolution this year endorses that report.

The draft resolution also decides that the United Nations conference on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects will be held in June/July 2001 and that a Preparatory Committee will be established. The draft resolution envisages that the Preparatory Committee will conduct the necessary preparatory work in the course of its no fewer than three sessions. The first session of the Preparatory Committee is to be held in New York from 28 February to 3 March 2000.

In view of General Assembly resolution 53/77 E of 1998 and the prospective United Nations conference in 2001, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the feasibility of restricting the manufacture and trade of such weapons to the manufacturers and dealers authorized by States. The draft resolution's sponsors are convinced that this study will be very useful not only for international efforts to prevent and reduce the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms, but also for the United Nations conference to be held in 2001.

The Chairman returned to the Chair.

I should like to inform the Committee that the sponsors and interested delegations have conducted very intensive consultations on this draft resolution and that the revised version, A/C.1/54/L.42/Rev.1, will appear soon. It is the wish of the its sponsors that the draft resolution receive overwhelming support from the First Committee — if possible, a consensus.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): Canada is pleased to present draft resolutions A/C.1/54/L.11, A/C.1/54/L.29 and A/C.1/54/L.30, under agenda items 68 and 76.

I begin by introducing the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction", circulated as document A/C.1/54/L.11., on which Canada and Poland have had the pleasure of working together for a number of years.

This draft resolution is familiar to delegations as an updated version of the text that was adopted last year without a vote. The version of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session was itself an updated version of the text that was adopted the previous year — again, without a vote.

During the course of this year's First Committee session, we have consulted widely on the draft text. An open-ended consultation was held on 20 October. We have also met bilaterally with delegations to review various elements of the draft resolution.

All of our contacts have reinforced the merit of maintaining the consensus nature of this important draft resolution. While various ideas have been expressed in favour of specific national viewpoints, all recognized that the text as it is represents a core vision that we all share.

We appreciate the support and cooperation we have received in our efforts once again to put forward a draft resolution which will maintain consensus and keep our consideration of the serious questions involved at the appropriate level — a level which addresses a common vision that we all hope will one day be fully achieved. We present this text for the Committee's consideration in the belief that, as in previous years, the draft resolution can be adopted without a vote.

Over the past 15 years, Canada has emphasized the role of verification as a central element in the maintenance of international peace and security. The language of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.29, entitled "Verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification", re-emphasizes the importance of verification to disarmament, arms control and confidence-building. Verification is at the heart of a number of treaties and agreements which have profoundly strengthened our international security. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the bilateral Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty of 1987, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the multilateral Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) of 1990 exemplify the varied but central role verification plays in facilitating arms control.

Experience suggests that verification activities embedded within sanctions and confidence- and security-building measures, while not strictly arms control per se, are playing an increasingly important role in the maintenance of international peace and security. Multilateral and bilateral agreements, decisions of competent international organizations and unilateral commitments all contain elements requiring verification.

In this regard, the relevance of verification methodologies developed within the context of disarmament and arms control is recognized to extend well beyond this issue area. The 1995 United Nations report (A/50/377) "Verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification", explored this theme in considerable detail.

Given today's uncertain international security environment, few issues are of greater significance in international disarmament and arms control negotiations than dependable verification measures. As tensions grow in various regions of the globe, the value of future disarmament and arms control agreements and related obligations will depend on them. As in past years, this draft resolution will serve to remind the international community of this truth and reinforce continuing efforts to maintain and strengthen the international verification regime.

I should also like formally to present draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30, entitled "The Conference on Disarmament decision (CD/1547) of 11 August 1998 to establish, under item 1 of its agenda entitled 'Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament', an ad hoc committee to negotiate, on the basis of the report of the Special Coordinator (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

Once again this year, I think that this title will be the longest of any draft resolution in the First Committee. Except for some factual adjustments, the draft resolution is identical to resolution 53/77 I of 4 December 1998, adopted without a vote by this Committee and the General Assembly. We all know that this draft resolution has a long, difficult history and that complex negotiations lie ahead. It is not the purpose of this draft resolution to review that history or to prejudge those negotiations or the manner in which they will be carried out. The draft resolution is therefore strictly procedural, anchored firmly in the realities of the Conference on Disarmament and the expectations of the international community.

We are of the view that no amendments should be made to this text; we think attempts to do so would inevitably open up substantive issues better reserved for the Conference on Disarmament itself or, as the case may be, better addressed in other draft resolutions before this Committee.

That said, Canada does consider it highly opportune for the First Committee to restate the importance the international community attaches to the conclusion of a multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as a significant contribution to nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects. It is our fervent wish that this consideration on our part will be widely shared in the First Committee and that the draft resolution will be adopted without amendment and without a vote.

Finally, I should like to remind delegations that this draft resolution is open for sponsorship; my colleague Mr. Hébert is in this room with the sponsorship sheet. We welcome all who wish to sign it.

Mr. Reimaa (Finland): On behalf of the European Union, I should like to address two draft resolutions in my statement this afternoon: draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30, just introduced by the representative of Canada, and draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.23, introduced earlier this week by the delegation of Mexico.

It is my honour on behalf of the European Union to speak on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — namely, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta align themselves with this statement.

The European Union has on several occasions stressed the great importance it attaches to the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty as one of the three measures of the programme of action on nuclear disarmament contained in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) 1995 document on principles and objectives.

In 1993 the General Assembly unanimously recommended initiating negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. In 1998 the Conference on Disarmament decided to establish an ad hoc committee for that purpose. The European Union member States joined the other Members of the United Nations in the General Assembly last year in welcoming that decision and encouraging the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish the ad hoc committee at the beginning of its 1999 session.

To our deep disappointment, the Conference on Disarmament was not able to respond to the unanimous recommendation of the General Assembly to re-establish the ad hoc committee on a fissile material cut-off treaty in 1999.

How can one explain to the international community, in view of the broad agreement shown in different forums and last year's decision by the Conference on Disarmament, that those negotiations have not continued this year? Pointing to the lack of agreement on the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament as a whole is not a satisfactory explanation, as this problem has not impeded important decisions in the past. This situation is a matter of great concern and affects the credibility of the Conference n Disarmament.

The European Union member States will continue to work strenuously towards fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations. The European Union is convinced that such a treaty, by irreversibly limiting the fissile material stockpiles available for use in nuclear weapons and by establishing an effective verification system, will strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and will constitute a significant internationally agreed step towards the achievement of complete nuclear disarmament.

We should urgently utilize this window of opportunity and ensure that the Conference on Disarmament begins fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations without delay. The General Assembly should send a strong and unambiguous signal to the Conference on Disarmament. The European Union hopes that consultations by the present and incoming Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament will lead to agreement on the commencement of negotiations as soon as the Conference on Disarmament resumes its work in January 2000.

The European Union member States have sponsored draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30, just introduced by Canada, which addresses the question of fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations in a short and non-confrontational way that found consensus in the General Assembly last year. The European Union calls upon all Member States of the United Nations to demonstrate their commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament and once again to adopt without a vote the draft resolution on a fissile material cut-off treaty, as presented in document A/C.1/54/L.30.

Let me now turn to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.23, which was introduced by the delegation of Mexico on 26 October. It is my honour on behalf of the European Union to speak on this draft resolution. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — namely, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Area country member of the European Economic Area (EEA), Iceland, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union member States support draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.23 on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) that was introduced by Mexico. The Union is actively pursuing efforts to promote early entry into force of this landmark achievement in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The European Union established a common position towards that end on 29 July 1999.

We welcome the declaration issued at the Vienna Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, which was held from 6 to 8 October 1999 in accordance with article XIV of the Treaty. The Conference made a strong call to all States that had not yet ratified the Treaty to sign and ratify it without delay.

The European Union hopes that the General Assembly will endorse that call and that determined international efforts to bring the CTBT into force will be continued. The CTBT contributes to both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, in line with obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference.

Since 1995, a lot has happened. The CTBT negotiations were concluded and the Treaty was opened for signature. The Treaty has been signed by the impressive number of 155 countries and ratified by 51 countries. Most European Union member States have ratified the CTBT, including all those member States whose ratification is required for the Treaty to enter into force — including two nuclear-weapon States, the United Kingdom and France.

The work in Vienna to establish the CTBT Organization and a verification system is well under way. These developments give rise to the conclusion that the time of nuclear-test explosions must now be considered over. An end to nuclear-test explosions has been a long-sought goal of the international community.

All the States that have yet to sign or ratify the Treaty should do so as soon as possible, in particular those States that are on the list of 44 States whose ratification is needed for the Treaty's entry into force. We extend the call to the Russian Federation, China and the United States to ratify the CTBT without delay. We also call on the three States that are on the list of 44 States and have not yet signed the Treaty to do so without delay.

The European Union deeply regrets the decision by the United States Senate not to ratify the CTBT. We believe this sends the wrong signal to would-be nuclear proliferators. We welcome the public commitment by President Clinton to continue to work for the ratification of the Treaty, as well as to continue to observe a moratorium on nuclear-test explosions.

The European Union is firmly convinced that the CTBT is strongly in the interest of all States as an essential barrier to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It is also an essential element in pursuing nuclear disarmament efforts. The European Union hopes that all United Nations Member States will give their support to this important draft resolution on the CTBT.

Mr. Kuindwa (Kenya): I should like to speak in support of draft resolutions A/C.1/54/L.25, A/C.1/54/L.42 and A/C.1/54/L.44, all relating to small arms.

The illicit flow of small arms, especially in Africa, is an issue of great concern to us. Their destructive and destabilizing consequences are evident throughout the continent. In his report of April 1998 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871), the Secretary-General rightly identified the flow of illicit arms to and in Africa as one of the greatest challenges facing the international community today.

The report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Small Arms (A/54/258) estimates the number of small arms and light weapons in existence worldwide at more than 500 million. Africa accounts for the largest percentage of these weapons.

The same report underscores the reasons why small arms and light weapons have become the favourite arms in many conflicts. It also points to the significant multiplication of arms manufacturing centres as a cause of concern.

There is an urgent need for us to respond to this situation in a comprehensive manner, as it affects the security, political independence and socio-economic development of African States. We believe it has become increasingly apparent that illicit trafficking in small arms can be stemmed only through concerted international efforts.

It is Kenya's hope that the 2001 conference and the process leading up to it will provide a framework conducive to addressing this very important issue in a comprehensive manner. We believe that for the conference to succeed in its objectives, the widest and most effective participation, especially by affected States, needs to be ensured.

It is also important to recall paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 53/77 E, which requested the Secretary-General to carry out and present in timely fashion a feasibility study on restricting the manufacture and trade of small arms and light weapons to manufacturers and dealers authorized by States. We believe that the study targets an important aspect of this issue, which should be fully addressed.

As far as regional initiatives are concerned, we encourage sustained support for the mechanisms that have been established through such efforts and hope that the work already carried out will be incorporated into the 2001 conference. In this regard, Kenya is preparing to host a subregional meeting to address the complex problem of small arms and its ramifications for security and conflict in our subregion.

In conclusion, we should like to place on record our appreciation to the authors of the three draft resolutions before us — South Africa, Mali and Japan. We are especially grateful to the delegation of Japan for the patience and commitment it has demonstrated on a subject of direct importance to developing countries in general and Africa in particular.

Ms. King (Australia): It is with great pleasure that Australia joins the 42 other sponsors in putting forward the draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), contained in document A/C.1/54/L.23.

As other sponsors have explained, the draft resolution is very straightforward, but also very necessary. In putting it forward, the sponsors are motivated by the fact that three years after the CTBT was adopted by an overwhelming majority in the General Assembly, it has yet to enter into force. And while the international community has made good progress in this direction, with 155 States having signed the Treaty and 51 States having ratified, there is clearly still some way to go.

Australia, which has ratified this Treaty, has often repeated the call for all States that have not yet signed and ratified it to do so forthwith. Indeed, many others have done the same. But it is important for the General Assembly to reinforce that call. This is what the draft resolution that we have put forward does.

It is uncomplicated and balanced, drawing on the declaration issued at the recent article XIV Conference in Vienna. It focuses on the need for all States to sign and ratify the Treaty and for those which have not signed to refrain from acts which could defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty in the meanwhile.

It is in all our interests to make every effort to ensure this Treaty becomes universal. To that end, we would encourage all nuclear-weapon States that have not ratified the Treaty to do so as a matter of priority. Having been deeply disappointed by the decision of the United States Senate to vote down United States ratification of the Treaty, we would also again urge that country's Administration to continue its efforts to build support for the Treaty with a view to enabling ratification by the United States.

It is also a matter of priority for those States that have not signed the Treaty — and in particular those that have recently demonstrated their capacity to test nuclear weapons — to sign as soon as possible.

This draft resolution also welcomes the contribution by States Signatories to the work of the CTBT Preparatory Commission's efforts to ensure that the Treaty's verification regime will be capable of meeting the verification requirements of the Treaty at entry into force. Given the progress already made on the international monitoring system, we believe this is an important point to make in this draft resolution.

The global monitoring system represents a significant investment by the international community. Indeed, we acknowledge that it requires large capital investment and would generate significant running costs. But without adequate and rigorous verification measures, the CTBT would be a weaker guardian against further nuclear testing.

We need to honour the responsibility, including the financial responsibility, that we willingly shouldered three years ago in adopting the Treaty, in order to ensure that the international verification and monitoring regime is operational and fully effective by the time of its entry into force.

Finally, we would simply express our sincere hope that the General Assembly and this Committee can send an unambiguous message of support for the CTBT by adopting this draft resolution without a vote.

Mr. Fadaifard (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have the pleasure to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12, entitled "Missiles", submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran under agenda item 76, "General and complete disarmament".

The production and testing of missiles as a defensive and offensive arms technology date back many decades, and their effectiveness and role in armed conflicts have convinced military establishments to initiate plans to develop missiles. The dawning of the space age added a new dimension to missiles. In fact, the peaceful application of outer space technology in ordinary life is becoming increasingly essential, and today any advance in space activity depends on the level of development of missile technology in the country concerned.

This trend appears to be continuing, and States are showing greater enthusiasm and eagerness to enter into the field of missile technology. After all, the legitimate interests of all countries in the peaceful use and exploration of space can by no means be denied.

The continued development of missiles in the military and civil areas will therefore be a reality for years to come. In other words, development of missiles will have security implications at the regional and international levels.

For the time being, no internationally negotiated legal instrument or arrangement exists to cover missiles in the broad context. Recently, States have shown greater interest in discussing various aspects of this question. However, due to the complexity of missile-related matters, no initiative has been taken at the global level, and the partial solutions presented thus far have been recognized and acknowledged as not feasible, practicable, or pragmatic.

A comprehensive study therefore needs to be initiated at the international level to address various aspects of the issue. No prejudgements should be made for such a study. Any attempt to narrow the scope of the study, which at any rate will be only a study at this juncture, would be tantamount to making the study less complete, less comprehensive and partial, and therefore would not contribute to a satisfactory result.

Our first international step should be as comprehensive as possible. This is the main thrust of our draft resolution. We have tried to make the draft resolution rather general. This might be interpreted by some representatives as being vague, but generality is the only way not to be specific, and being specific would in this case prejudge the outcome of the study.

A qualified panel of governmental experts appointed by the Secretary-General on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, and particularly with the participation of Member States which are advanced in the field of missile technology, would be the best forum for initiating such a study, and we request the Secretary-General to provide the first report on the issue.

My delegation sincerely hopes that we will all join our voices together this year to call for the initiation of such a study and adopt this draft resolution without a vote.

Mr. Enkhsaikhan (Mongolia): My delegation has asked to speak today to make some observations on the draft resolutions before the First Committee and to indicate the draft documents that the Mongolian delegation intends to co-sponsor in view of the importance we attach to them — namely, documents A/C.1/54/L.23, A/C.1/54/L.9, A/C.1/54/L.18, A/C.1/54/L.30 and A/C.1/54/L.34.

Under the cluster of issues on nuclear weapons, my delegation wishes to make an observation on the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. Mongolia strongly believes that the Treaty remains a cornerstone of strategic balance and global stability. It is in our view a fundamental instrument to achieve future reductions in strategic nuclear armaments. The question now is how best to achieve the goal of reduction and ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

While we all have our national concerns and interests, the best way forward is perhaps to look beyond those national priorities and take into account our collective interests. Therefore, we call upon States parties to the ABM Treaty to comply fully with its provisions, pending any future agreement or any other arrangements which may be reached by the parties concerned.

On the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Vienna Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT successfully concluded its work and renewed its determination to work for universalization of the Treaty and its early entry into force. As a State party which was among the very first to sign and ratify the CTBT, Mongolia wishes to join in sponsoring the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.23, which we consider a follow-up to the Vienna Conference.

On nuclear disarmament, Mongolia is a proponent of the international community's concerted and determined move forward in a non-discriminatory manner and of an all-inclusive approach to realistic and achievable steps towards the ultimate and total elimination of nuclear weapons. We have no quarrel or dispute with anybody as to how best to achieve nuclear disarmament, so long as we persistently move in that direction.

We are therefore more than happy and willing to support any proposal that leads to the attainment of that ultimate goal. From this standpoint, Mongolia intends to sponsor the draft resolutions entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", submitted by the delegation of Japan and contained in document A/C.1/54/L.9, the draft resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", in A/C.1/54/L.18, and draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30, on the Conference on Disarmament decision of 11 August 1998.

As regards nuclear-weapon-free zones, Mongolia is firmly committed to the strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime and, for that matter, to the pursuit, extension and establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones wherever and whenever possible. With a view to making further contributions to the process of globalization of the existing nuclear non-proliferation regime, Mongolia has declared its commitment to its nuclear-weapon-free status and is now moving to institutionalize and formalize that status. To that end, we expect and look forward to the adoption of national legislation by the Mongolian Parliament soon.

From that perspective, we fully support the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Pelindaba, establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in the three respective regions, and the promotion of the nuclear-weapon-free status of the southern hemisphere and adjacent areas. We will therefore co-sponsor the draft resolution introduced earlier this afternoon by Brazil, contained in document A/C.1/54/L.34.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.37, entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels", on behalf of the delegations of Bangladesh, Belarus, the Czech Republic, Fiji, Mexico, Nepal, Norway, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and my own delegation.

While nuclear weapons pose a threat of global annihilation, it is conventional weapons that continue to be used in scores of conflicts affecting various parts of the world. The conventional arms race also consumes the vast majority of the resources expended on armaments by rich and poor nations. After an encouraging decline in outlays on conventional weapons in the immediate aftermath of the cold war, there is now the danger of a revived emphasis on the build-up of conventional armaments and armed forces, for several reasons.

One of these is the unfortunate proliferation of conflicts and wars in various parts of the world. Secondly, there is a growing divergence in the strategic priorities and perceptions of some of the major Powers. A third reason is the ambitions of new, aspiring great Powers. Fourthly, technological progress has made the acquisition of new weapons and modes of warfare feasible and, perhaps, irresistible for the military-industrial complexes in at least some of the most powerful States.

Disarmament in the conventional field will need to be promoted in several ways — by restraints on the qualitative and quantitative development of conventional weapons, by balanced restraint on the transfer and acquisition of such weapons and by the promotion of nuclear disarmament and global agreement for a halt in the arms race between the major Powers.

At the same time, it is obvious that the principal means to address issues relating to conventional weapons are at the regional and subregional levels. This is so because, in the first instance, conflicts and confrontation arise among most States at the regional and subregional levels. This is especially the case now, in the aftermath of the cold war. The resolution of such conflicts and disputes is essential to success in promoting conventional arms control.

Secondly, regional and subregional approaches are also the best way to arrest the emergence of arms imbalances and asymmetries that could destabilize sensitive regions and threaten international peace and security. This can happen if some regional States resort to large-scale acquisition or production of armaments while other States in the region are denied the ability to match such acquisitions. A grave arms imbalance can encourage aggression against weaker States. It can propel the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. These concepts are covered by the third, fourth and fifth preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/54/L.37.

The sixth preambular paragraph notes with particular interest the initiatives taken in various regions of the world, including Latin America and South Asia. It also recognizes the relevance of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). The seventh preambular paragraph reaffirms the accepted principle that militarily significant States with larger military capabilities have a special responsibility in promoting such agreements for regional security.

The eighth preambular paragraph reiterates the central objective of regional and subregional arms control — that is, to prevent the possibility of military attack launched by surprise.

Operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution once again asks for urgent consideration of the issues raised in the draft resolution. Operative paragraph 2 once again requests the Conference on Disarmament to consider the formulation of principles that can serve as a framework for regional agreements on conventional arms control.

The sponsors are disappointed that the Conference on Disarmament has for the past several years not found it possible to respond positively to this recommendation of the General Assembly. The sponsors express the hope that the Conference on Disarmament will initiate consideration of this issue next year and set up an appropriate mechanism to respond to the recommendation in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution in A/C.1/54/L.37.

I express the hope that this draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): The purpose of my delegation's statement is to address the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament" (A/C.1/54/L.41), introduced by the representative of Myanmar before this Committee today.

My delegation has decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution for the following reasons. First, the draft resolution reaffirms the commitment of the international community to the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Secondly, it refers to paragraph 50 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly. Thirdly, it recalls the historic advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, issued on 8 July 1996. Fourthly, it refers to paragraph 114 and other relevant recommendations contained in the Final Document of the Twelfth Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, held at Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998. Fifthly, it emphasizes a phased programme for the elimination of nuclear weapons to establish a world free of nuclear weapons.

For the above reasons, my delegation is convinced that the draft resolution will receive the widest possible support from the members of this Committee.

Organization of work

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with our programme of work and the agreed timetable, the Committee will begin the third stage of its work — action on all draft resolutions under agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 - next Monday morning, 1 November. In order to prepare us for that stage of our work, I wish now to describe the procedure that the Committee will follow in the voting on the draft resolutions. These procedures are set out in rules 123 to 133 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. I simply wish to make a few practical observations in this respect, which have a sound legal basis.

First, the procedure for the adoption of draft resolutions consists of just a few steps. At the beginning of each meeting, delegations will have the opportunity to introduce revised draft resolutions, if such exist. I stress the word "revised". Then I shall call on delegations that wish to make general statements or comments, not explanations of vote on the draft resolutions.

Here I wish to digress for a moment to make a request as Chairman of the Committee; it is up to members to accede to this request or not. I simply wish to share this concern: I do not think it would be a good idea, during the process of voting on draft resolutions, for us to engage again in a general debate, as often happens in this Committee. This adds nothing to the content of draft resolutions and changes nothing in countries' positions. I believe that if we could avoid such debates and concentrate more on the voting, we would be acting much more efficiently. This is merely a concern that I wish to share with delegations. Obviously, no one is going to be prevented from making statements or observations of a general nature.

Next, delegations will be able to explain their votes or positions on draft resolutions before a decision is taken. After the Committee has taken a decision, I shall call on delegations that wish to explain their positions or votes on the draft resolution just adopted. That is, delegations will be able to explain their votes before or after the voting, but they should inform the Chair or sign up on the list of speakers in advance.

In accordance with the rules of procedure, the sponsors of a draft resolution cannot make statements in explanation of vote or position; they can make only general statements or observations regarding a new cluster of draft resolutions at the beginning of a meeting. The sponsors of a given draft resolution cannot explain their votes or positions, which seems quite logical.

In order to avoid misunderstandings, I would ask delegations that wish to request a recorded vote to communicate their intention to do so to the Secretariat before the Committee has begun to take decisions on the relevant cluster. We must know about this in advance, even in the case of separate recorded votes on individual paragraphs. Delegations must also inform the Secretariat in advance of the postponement of a decision on a draft resolution. Every effort should be made to avoid the postponement of a decision, but in any case, I ask delegations to inform us in advance of any postponement.

I hope the procedures I have outlined are clear to all delegations.

If no delegation wishes to make on observation in respect of this procedure, we shall consider it adopted.

Thus, on Monday, 1 November, the Committee will begin to take action on all draft resolutions, by cluster, following the order adopted by consensus by the Committee. Postponement of action for convincing reasons will be possible at the request of delegations, or if a draft resolution requires the preparation of a report on its programme budget implications.

I wish to announce that, of the draft resolutions already introduced for the Committee's consideration, those ready for voting are the following: A/C.1/54/L.17, A/C.1/54/L.23, A/C.1/54/L.24, A/C.1/54/L.36 and A/C.1/54/L.43.

In cluster 2, the draft resolutions that are ready for action are A/C.1/54/L.6, A/C.1/54/L.11 and A/C.1/54/L.26.

In cluster 3, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22 is ready for action.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) *(spoke in French)*: I should like to draw the attention of the Committee, and of the Chairman, to the fact that consultations are still under way on A/C.1/54/L.17 and that some delegations are not yet ready to pronounce themselves on that draft. For that reason, I am asking the Secretariat to postpone action on that draft resolution.

The Chairman *(spoke in Spanish)*: The Secretariat will take the necessary measures so that no action is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.17 until everyone is ready, and in keeping with the rules of procedure.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/54/PV.20

General Assembly

Fifty-fourth Session

First Committee

20th Meeting

Monday, 1 November 1999, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

Chairman: Mr. González . . . . (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Crash of an Egyptian aeroplane

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I should like to ask all members of the Committee to observe a minute of silence for the very regrettable crash that occurred yesterday involving an Egyptian aircraft. There were many casualties in that sad tragedy, and I ask members to stand and observe a minute of silence for the victims.

The members of the Committee observed a minute of silence.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): As I informed members of the Committee at our meeting on Friday, 29 October 1999, this morning the Committee will proceed to take decisions on the draft resolutions that appear in the Chairman's paper in the following sequence: cluster 1, nuclear weapons, draft resolutions A/C.1.54/L.24 and A/C.1/54/L.36; cluster 2, weapons of mass destruction, draft resolutions A/C.1/54/L.11 and A/C.1/54/L.26; and cluster 3, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22. The draft texts I have not mentioned are still the subject of consultations.

Before continuing, I should like to repeat the procedure I outlined on Friday for this stage of the Committee's work. At the outset of each meeting, delegations will have an opportunity to introduce revised draft resolutions. I will then call upon those delegations wishing to make general statements or comments, not explanations position or vote, on the draft resolutions in a particular cluster.

Thereafter, delegations may proceed to explain their position or vote on the draft resolutions before a decision is taken.

After the Committee has taken a decision on a draft resolution, I will call upon those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote on the particular draft resolution on which a decision has just been taken.

Thus, delegations will have two opportunities to explain votes or positions on a particular draft resolution: either before or after a vote is taken on a draft. In accordance with the rules of procedure, sponsors of draft resolutions are not permitted to make statements of explanation of vote. They can make only general statements on clusters of draft resolutions at the beginning of a meeting.

In order to avoid misunderstanding, I would again urge those delegations wishing to request a recorded vote on a particular draft resolution kindly to inform the Secretariat of their intention before the Committee begins its action on the relevant cluster.

With regard to any postponement of action on any draft resolution, delegations should inform the Secretariat in advance. Every effort should be made to refrain from resorting to a postponement of action.

I hope these procedures are clear to all delegations.

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

I call first on those delegations wishing to introduce revised draft resolutions, if any. There appear to be none.

I now call on delegations wishing to make general statements on draft resolutions contained in cluster 1, "Nuclear weapons". There appear to be none.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to make some procedural announcements relating to the process.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): As delegations may have noticed, informal paper No. 1 has been distributed. This will assist delegations in voting by letting them know how many draft resolutions will be taken up and in what sequence.

Regarding informal paper No. 1, there has been a request for draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.23 to be postponed. There has also been a request to postpone draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.43. Therefore, this morning the Committee will take up draft resolutions A/C.1/54/L.24, A/C.1/54/L.36, A/C.1/54/L.6, A/C.1/54/L.11, A/C.1/54/L.26 and A/C.1/54/L.22.

An informal paper will be distributed at every meeting which will list all draft resolutions to be taken up. For instance, this afternoon there will be another list.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote or position on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.24 before a decision is taken.

There appear to be none, so the Committee will proceed directly to the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.24.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.24, entitled "Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco)", was introduced by the representative of Mexico at the Committee's 16th meeting, on 26 October 1999. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.24 are listed in the draft resolution itself.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.24 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.24 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted. I see none.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36. I call first on those representatives wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

There appear to be none.

Mr. Al-Ahmed (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Secretariat will take the necessary steps to include Saudi Arabia among the sponsors.

We shall now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36, entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons", was introduced by the representative of Pakistan at the Committee's 19th meeting, on 29 October 1999. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Myanmar and Saudi Arabia.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36 was adopted by 77 votes to none, with 50 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegations of Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone and Zambia informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes or positions on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Lee Kie-cheon (Republic of Korea): My delegation wishes to make a few comments on the draft resolution just adopted. The primary issue regarding negative security assurances centres on the question of through whom and in what form such assurances will be given. With respect to countries that are to receive assurances, my delegation has upheld the principle that non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that fully comply with their obligations, in particular with those contained in articles II and III of the NPT, have a legitimate right to receive assurances from nuclear-weapon States that they will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against them. Nuclear-weapon States have a corresponding obligation to assure non-nuclear States that are faithfully complying with the NPT against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.These mutual responsibilities, conditions for all States parties to the NPT, will doubtless contribute to strengthening the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

On the issue of form, my delegation has considered the options expressed by those who favour a single legally binding instrument and those who favour bilateral and other approaches. Our firm belief is that all States should seek a practical solution acceptable to all.

My delegation decided to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution, as we do not feel it adequately reflects these concerns.

Ms. Kunadi (India): India has consistently maintained that the only credible guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons lies in their total elimination. Until this objective is achieved, as an interim measure and as one that complements other measures to reduce nuclear dangers, including de-alerting, we believe that there exists an obligation on the part of States possessing nuclear weapons to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use of such weapons. This obligation should be of an internationally binding character, clear, credible, universal and without discrimination.

No delegation is opposed to the establishment of an ad hoc committee on negative security assurances in the Conference on Disarmament. Such an ad hoc committee will be an essential element in any balanced and comprehensive programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament next year.

For its part, conscious of its responsibilities as a nuclear-weapon State, India has stated that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons against nuclear-weapon States and that it remains willing to strengthen this undertaking by entering into bilateral agreements on "no first use", or multilateral negotiations on global "no first use".

As we have stated that we will not be the first to use nuclear weapons, there remains no basis for their use against countries which do not have nuclear weapons. India respects the choice exercised by non-nuclear-weapon States in establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned and remains willing to convert this commitment into a legal obligation.

Mr. Luck (Australia): Australia considers that pending the elimination of nuclear weapons, consistent with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), negative security assurances are an essential reinforcing element underpinning the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Australia considers that those countries that are non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT, that have renounced the nuclear-weapons option and that are in full compliance with their NPT obligations have a legitimate claim to credible, comprehensive and effective negative security assurances from the five nuclear-weapon States. Negative security assurances are also an important inducement for the States still outside the NPT to accede to the Treaty, and Australia continues to hold the view that only States willing to assure the security of others by becoming parties to the NPT should benefit from negative security assurances.

Regrettably, the failure of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36 to give due primacy to the particular claims and interests of States parties to the NPT in this regard prevented Australia from supporting the draft resolution.

Mr. Du Preez (South Africa): South Africa abstained in the voting on this draft resolution.

The South African Government strongly supports the granting of legally binding security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This position has been demonstrated by our actions and by the proposals which South Africa submitted in the context of the strengthened NPT review process. In addition, South Africa submitted to the third session of the NPT Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference a draft protocol on the prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

These actions underpin South Africa's belief that security assurances are an integral part of the NPT bargain, by which the non-nuclear-weapon States have undertaken a legal commitment not to aspire to these weapons.

The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has again demonstrated its inability to successfully address this issue as well as other issues related to nuclear disarmament. As was the case with resolution 53/75, adopted last year, this year's draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.36, just adopted, does not take account of these views, which prompted my delegation to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee has thus completed matters relating to cluster, in view of the postponements of action on some draft resolutions. We shall now proceed to cluster 2.

I shall call on those delegations wishing to make general statements on draft resolutions contained in this cluster, "Other weapons of mass destruction".

There appear to be none. The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.6.

I now call on those delegations who wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.6.

There appear to be none. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.6, entitled "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes", was introduced by the representative of Burkina Faso on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States at the Committee's 19th meeting, on 29 October 1999. Guyana has also become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.6 have expressed the wish that the draft resolution be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.6 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of India, who wishes to explain India's position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Ms. Kunadi (India): My delegation has requested the floor after the adoption of this draft resolution without a vote to state its position with regard to operative paragraph 8.

India has been fully supportive of the central objective of this draft resolution and has therefore joined the consensus. India was one of the few countries which supported the retention of the issue of radiological weapons on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, as it believes that the international community must remain vigilant to the grave dangers posed by nuclear or radioactive waste and the possibility of its military use.

Operative paragraph 8 of the draft resolution refers to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. As a developing country, India attaches great importance not only to the safety but also to the full utilization of all aspects of the fuel cycle to derive maximum benefits. Therefore, spent fuel is not waste but a valuable resource, a position that India has been consistently supporting at the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction", was introduced by the representative of Canada at the Committee's 19th meeting, on 29 October 1999. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11 are listed in the draft resolution itself.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of this draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call now on those delegations wishing to explain their positions on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): Egypt has traditionally supported all measures leading to the promotion of international and regional stability and has always committed itself to engage in constructive action in the fulfilment of that objective. It is in that spirit that we cannot but sympathize with the general thrust of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11, as it addresses a global instrument which aims at prohibiting a whole category of weapons of mass destruction, namely chemical weapons, thus giving the Chemical Weapons Convention its effective, important impact in the field of disarmament, as opposed to non-proliferation.

Nevertheless, Egypt would like to stress once again its well-known position vis-à-vis the Convention and its implications in the Middle East region. Our commitment, explained vividly, towards the prohibition of chemical weapons and all weapons of mass destruction is best exemplified by President Mubarak's 1990 initiative on the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction, underscoring the following elements: first, a total prohibition in the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction without exception, be they nuclear, chemical or biological; secondly, that all States in the region should make a solemn declaration, without exception, of reciprocal commitment and obligation in this regard; and, thirdly, that measures for verification of full compliance must be underscored.

The Security Council expressed support for our initiative in resolution 687 (1991) and again in 1992. In July 1991 Foreign Minister Amre Moussa, in his letter addressed to the Secretary-General, explained that priority must be given to freeing the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction and to increasing the security of the States of the region with a lower level of armament, as well as to the realization of equal and reciprocal security for all States in the region, not through a qualitative edge, nor through military superiority but through dialogue, negotiations and a deep commitment to peace, equality and security for all.

Although Egypt participated actively in the long and arduous negotiations which took place in the Conference on Disarmament and which led to the elaboration of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention, its position has been voiced since day one, at the time of the opening for signature in January 1993 by the Conference on Disarmament. Indeed, our position emanates from and is firmly based on our regional considerations and concerns. For a long time now, Israel has been repeatedly stating on various occasions and in various forums that the application of this Convention should include all States in the Middle East region within a mutually acceptable verification mechanism. However, Egypt has declined to sign the Chemical Weapons Convention until Israel joins the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and we urge Israel to apply the same argument it seems to advocate, and in fact employs, with regard to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

Despite all these considerations, my delegation did not request a recorded vote on this draft resolution. However, we do not consider ourselves to be part of any consensus decision taken on this draft resolution today and would like to register our reservation on the content and letter of operative paragraph 5.

Mr. Benitez Verson (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is very satisfied to see that once again the Committee has been able to adopt the draft resolution on the Chemical Weapons Convention without a vote.

Cuba, as a party to the Convention and a current member of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), will continue to work intensively to promote the timely and effective implementation of all the provisions of the Convention. Although operative paragraph 7 of the draft resolution the Committee has just adopted welcomes the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, I should like to place on record my country's concern over the lack of an agreement defining the relationship between the United Nations and the OPCW in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.

More than three years have elapsed since the entry into force of the Convention, but we still have not been able to finalize an agreement between the two organizations. In Cuba's opinion, this dangerous legal vacuum should not be allowed to continue indefinitely. Bearing in mind that the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has already prepared a draft agreement, the only way of securing the prompt implementation of this process is to guarantee the direct and transparent participation of the Member States of the United Nations in the consideration of the draft agreement, and this participation will have to be followed by the preparation of a final agreement acceptable to both organizations.

Ms. Kunadi (India): The Indian delegation wishes to state its position on certain aspects of the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

As we stated in the general debate, India, as an original State party to the CWC, has endeavoured to discharge fully and faithfully its obligations under the Convention. There remains a continuing responsibility of all States parties to the CWC to ensure that all its provisions are implemented fully and effectively. It is a matter of collective concern that some States parties have, despite voicing support for the Convention, not provided full declarations to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), adversely affecting the inspection schedules. We hope that this situation will be redressed as soon as possible.

The Chemical Weapons Convention, the first multilateral disarmament agreement of a universal character eliminating a complete class of weapons of mass destruction, offered an opportunity to put in place a multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory legal mechanism that will simultaneously address proliferation concerns emanating from unregulated transfers, while at the same time promoting the economic development of the States parties.

The CWC, under article XI, placed an obligation on States parties to review their export policies, as a measure to prevent the spread of chemical weapons and equipment for purposes contrary to the objectives of the Convention. However, the persistence of certain ad hoc control regimes creating a dual category of States parties within the CWC stresses the need for the early implementation of all provisions of the CWC to safeguard its long-term viability and effectiveness.

Mr. Shafqat Ali Khan (Pakistan): Pakistan has been an ardent supporter of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are satisfied to see the progress being made in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague on the effective implementation of this landmark Convention.

We support the broad thrust of the draft resolution which has just been adopted. However, in the context of the theme expressed in operative paragraph 7 we have some concerns. My delegation, to begin with, is not fully satisfied with the manner in which negotiations for a relationship agreement between the United Nations and the OPCW have been conducted, and it is precisely for this reason that a relationship agreement between the two organizations is yet to be finalized.

In the spirit of compromise, we have not pushed for the inclusion of a particular reference reflecting this reality in the current draft, but my delegation reserves the right to raise this issue in other appropriate forums.

Mr. Shakerian (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation is happy that draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11 was adopted without a vote. My country attaches great importance to the full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. I should like to add my voice to the concerns raised by some delegations about operative paragraph 7. We are seriously concerned about the stalemate on a relationship agreement between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), an agreement which in our view is very important for facilitating the work of the OPCW.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We have concluded our consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11.

The Committee will now take proceed to action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26.

I shall first call on those members of the Committee wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

There appear to be none. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26, entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons", was introduced by the representative of Belarus at the Committee's 17th meeting, on 27 October 1999. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2. Egypt has also joined as a sponsor.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon those representatives wishing to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted. There appear to be none.

The Committee will now move on to cluster 3. Does any delegation wish to make a general statement on any draft resolution contained in cluster 3?

I see none.

We shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22.

If no delegations wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting, we shall now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", was introduced by the representative of Sri Lanka at the Committee's 16th meeting, on 26 October 1999. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2. The following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Côte d'Ivoire, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan,

Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe.

Against:
None.

Abstaining:
Israel, United States of America.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22 was adopted by 138 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegations of Kuwait and Zambia informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote or position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): Although the United States agrees with some elements of the draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", we believe it also includes provisions that are overstated or unwise. Accordingly, the United States abstained, as we did last year.

There is unprecedented peaceful cooperation in outer space, and we have every reason to believe that this pattern of peaceful cooperation will continue. It seems evident, indeed almost incontestable, that there is no arms race in outer space. Military uses of outer space enhance international peace and security and have broad advantages for the international community. Practical examples include treaty compliance and monitoring, the global positioning system, refugee tracking, counter-terrorism and sanctions enforcement.

For all these reasons, the United States does not believe that the international community needs to undertake an active and energetic effort to prevent an arms race in outer space, nor that the task is urgent. Nevertheless, with a view to getting down to work in the Conference on Disarmament on such issues as a fissile material cut-off treaty, my Government has indicated some flexibility related to discussion of outer-space issues in an appropriate forum. Any such discussion would have to examine topics and proposals on their merits and without preconceptions. We hope that the ideas by former Conference on Disarmament President Dembri, and the good work of outgoing and incoming Presidents Luck and Kreid, will help us find our way forward.

Mr. Donaldson (United Kingdom): My delegation has requested the floor in order to give an explanation of vote on behalf of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and on behalf of Germany regarding the decision on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

Although our delegations have supported the draft resolution, we want to make sure that our votes will not be misconstrued when the subject of outer space is addressed at the 2000 session of the Conference on Disarmament. In the past, both the United Kingdom and Germany have actively contributed to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on outer space and have also formulated a number of proposals. Unfortunately, it was not possible to achieve a consensus on any of the proposals that were discussed at the time.

The United Kingdom and Germany recognize the continued validity of the subject. We are therefore ready to support consideration of an appropriate subsidiary body in the Conference on Disarmament, as well as the re-examination and possible updating of its mandate, with an open mind and in a constructive manner.

It remains our view that the Conference on Disarmament has other important work to do in 2000 which should be given high priority. Above all, our delegations are committed to an early start on negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty at the beginning of next year's session. For this reason, we wish to make it clear that our positive votes on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22 should not be understood as endorsing agreements in advance to any particular model for a subsidiary body to address this issue. We will participate in the discussion on the Conference on Disarmament's programme of work in a constructive spirit, and we are ready to re-examine the question of the most appropriate way to deal with the issue of outer space in the light of the aspects I have just mentioned.

Mr. Becker (Israel): Israel would like to say a word in explanation of our position on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11. As it has done in previous years, Israel once again joined the consensus on the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical weapons and on Their Destruction". Israel signed the Convention and took an active role in the endeavours to shape it into a workable mechanism. By doing so, Israel reflected its vision of a world free of chemical weapons.

In signing the Convention, Israel expressed its hope that other countries in the region would soon follow suit. Among those are countries that are known for the use of chemical weapons in the past and are believed to continuously strive to improve their chemical capabilities. Unfortunately, none of those countries has either signed or ratified the Convention, and what is more, have indicated collectively that they would not change their position even if Israel ratified the Convention.

The reason Israel has not yet ratified the Convention relates to Israel's unique political environment. At the signing ceremony in 1993, Israel made it clear that it would seek to ratify the Convention subject to its regional concerns. These considerations remain no less valid today as Israel has entered into significant negotiations in a process to bring peace and security to the Middle East.

What Israel has stated here must not be construed as prejudging the outcome of Israel's decisions on ratification or of Israel's continued support of the Convention. Positive changes in the security climate in the Middle East will affect Israel's attitude on the ratification issue.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Before proceeding I, as Chairman, would like to make the following statement.

When the process on a particular draft resolution has been completed — when all delegations have expressed their views and the Committee has moved on to another draft resolution — a delegation should not explain its position in respect of draft resolutions on which decisions were taken earlier. The Chair wishes statements to be made only on draft resolutions that are being considered.

At present I have two requests to speak in explanation of vote; I take it that they relate to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26. We have already completed action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.11. If these statements do indeed pertain to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26, then please feel free to explain your positions but I ask members to kindly make their requests early enough to be heard during the consideration of the draft resolution that they wish to address. So on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26 I call on the representative of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Forqueraut de la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like briefly to speak on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". France voted in favour of this draft resolution, as did many other countries. I should like to recall that our positive vote does not prevent France from being dedicated here to what was called in Geneva the Dembri compromise, which included provisions on outer space. We sincerely hope that the decision that will be taken at the next session, that is, in January 2000, will take that compromise into account to the greatest extent possible, so that on outer space, as on nuclear weapons, we will have a compromise that comes very close to the Dembri compromise and will make it possible to give cut-off negotiations a good start at the very beginning of the next session.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Does any other delegation wish to speak? There appear to be none. Taking into consideration all the requests to defer consideration of other draft resolutions that we had originally planned to consider this morning, I would say that we have worked little but well. I hope that this augurs equally well for the coming days.

We have thus completed our consideration and adoption of all the draft resolutions allotted for this meeting.

Before concluding, I call on the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I am taking the floor first to thank the Secretariat for all the efforts it has been making to facilitate the work of delegations. In that context, I should like to ask the Secretariat whether it would be possible to have the informal paper distributed one meeting in advance. It is a very useful document that considerably facilitates the work of delegations and allows them to take a position. As long as the Secretariat has this information in advance, would it not be possible to have the document distributed one meeting before the Committee takes action? That would be of enormous assistance to delegations.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I can assure the delegation of Algeria that the Secretariat will make every effort to bring that about.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

United Nations

A/C.1/54/PV.21

General Assembly

Fifty-fourth Session

First Committee

21st Meeting
Monday, 1 November 1999, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

Chairman: Mr. González . . . . (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 *(continued)*

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): As I informed members of the Committee this morning, we will take decisions on the draft resolutions that appear in Secretariat Informal Paper No. 2. I believe all members have copies. Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.29 from cluster 6 has been deferred once again.

Mr. Ibragimov (Uzbekistan): On behalf of five Central Asian States I should like to introduce the draft decision entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia", A/C.1/54/L.35. The Central Asian States consistently undertake measures aimed at the maintenance and strengthening of regional peace and security. Among those, we can attribute the initiative of announcing Central Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Up to the present day significant progress has been achieved in the realization of this process.

Since the adoption by consensus of General Assembly resolution 53/77 A on 4 December 1998, the Central Asian countries have conducted a number of intensive United Nations-sponsored meetings of experts from Central Asian countries on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region. As a result of those discussions we have managed to come very close to agreement on many aspects of a draft Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty. Our countries have agreed to submit a draft decision that calls for the inclusion of a separate item entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia" in the provisional agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

On behalf of all countries of our region, allow me to express our sincere hope that the draft will have the support of all countries and will be adopted by consensus during the current session.

Mr. Forquenot de la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like briefly to introduce the draft decision submitted by France entitled "Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters", document A/C.1/54/L.28. France was approached by the United Nations Secretariat with a view to proposing to the General Assembly an endorsement of the recommendations of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters at its last working sessions in Geneva and New York, held respectively in January and June 1999 under the chairmanship of Ms. Thérèse Delpech, and endorsed again by the Secretary-General in his report dated 12 August 1999, document A/54/218.

Inasmuch as the French expert in the Advisory Board has presided over the work which led to those recommendations, France agreed to the request, which pertains to a purely procedural decision, while recalling, of course, that the experts appointed by the Secretary-General to sit on the Advisory Board are acting on their own behalf and not as representatives of their countries.

The recommendations involved here are to change the language in the mandate of the Board so as to bring it into closer conformity with its actual functions as they have been performed for more than a decade. If the First

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Committee and the General Assembly agree to this, the mandate of the Advisory Board would henceforth be

> "(a) To advise the Secretary-General on matters within the area of arms limitation and disarmament, including on studies and research under the auspices of the United Nations or institutions within the United Nations system".

The other functions of the Advisory Board under the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme would remain unchanged.

Since this draft decision is essentially procedural in nature, France has not asked for any co-sponsorship and hopes that the text will be adopted without a vote.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on those delegations who wish to make general comments on draft resolutions in cluster 4.

Mr. Al-Albuge (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have two comments. The first concerns draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.22, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". At a time when the international community is making efforts to coordinate activities aimed at the exploration of outer space and to consecrate its use for purely peaceful purposes, we are concerned at the steps taken by the United States of America towards the militarization of outer space. Among them is what has been declared by the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) with regard to the project "Vision for 2020", which has extended the scope of the American military in outer space by conducting tests of anti-satellite laser weapons, using laser beams to dislodge satellites from their planned orbits.

In addition to developing anti-ballistic missiles the American plans, if executed, would violate the Outer Space Treaty, to which the United States itself acceded in 1967, which stipulated that the exploration and use of outer space would be for all mankind. The Treaty also stipulated that outer space should be used by all States parties to the Treaty for purely peaceful purposes. We hope that the American delegate will ensure the safeguards for Member States by making sure that his country does not continue implementing the Vision 2020 project, which is aimed at the militarization of outer space.

Secondly, with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.26, on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, spent uranium, depleted uranium, is considered one of these types. We hope in the near future that it will be understood as such so that it can be prohibited from being used for military purposes. Such use had led to an environmental disaster in Iraq, as the United States and Britain used it in their act of aggression against Iraq in 1991.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Does any delegation wish to comment on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.44 before we take action?

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.44, entitled "Illicit traffic in small arms", was introduced by the representative of South Africa at the 18th meeting, on 28 October. In addition to the sponsors listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2, the following countries have also become sponsors: Bolivia, Canada, El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica and Venezuela.

Mr. Kambire (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like to add Burkina Faso to the list of sponsors.

Mr. Kerpens (Suriname): Suriname would also like to add its name to the list of sponsors of this draft resolution.

Mr. Pappalardo (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Paraguay would also like to be added to the list of sponsors.

Mr. Fofana (Mali) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Mali wishes to become a sponsor of draft resolution L.44.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.44 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to explain my Government's position on draft resolution L.44. This resolution deals with one of the topics that is receiving prioirty attention from Member States right now. Cuba supports the broadest possible debate on issues relating to the illicit trade in weapons, including small arms and light weapons, but we consider that in discussing the topic and adopting concrete measures we must take into consideration and respect the peculiar features of each region and country concerned.

My country's support for draft resolution L.44 does not prejudge Cuba's position on the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials. We are very gratified to see that it is welcomed in the third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. Negotiations on the Convention were held within the context of the Organization of American States (OAS), so Cuba did not participate directly in them and therefore cannot fully commit itself to its outcomes. Furthermore, the Convention is open for signature only to members of the OAS, to which Cuba does not belong, for reasons that are familiar to all.

As regards the information that the Secretary-General is asked in operative paragraph 1 to submit to the international conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, Cuba does not object to the wording therein on the understanding that this does not in any way diminish the part which we believe should be played by the preparatory committee of the international conference. We reiterate our position to the effect that in the final analysis it will be up to the preparatory committee to take responsibility for the final decisions on the documents that must be sent in advance to the international conference.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Does any delegation wish to make a general statement on any or all of the draft resolutions contained in cluster 5? There seem to be none.

I now call on those members of the Committee who wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.37.

Ms. Kunadi (India): In 1993 the Disarmament Commission adopted consensus guidelines on regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security. Therefore, we are not convinced that draft resolution L.37 — in particular operative paragraph 2, which calls on the Conference on Disarmament, a forum for negotiation of disarmament instruments of global application, "to consider the formulation of principles that can serve as a framework for regional agreements on conventional arms control" — has any productive value.

A reference is made in the sixth preambular paragraph to conventional arms control in South Asia. India has security concerns that cannot be confined to what is referred to as "South Asia". India has been committed to a composite bilateral dialogue with Pakistan, the main sponsor of this draft resolution, the first agenda item of which is peace and security, including confidence-building measures. The narrow definition in the draft resolution does not fully reflect the security concerns in South Asia and adopts an approach far more restrictive than the one on which the composite bilateral dialogue is based.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now take action on draft resolution L.37. A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.37, entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels", was introduced by the representative of Pakistan at the 19th meeting, on 29 October. The sponsors are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2.

In this connection, the representative of Norway has informed the Secretariat that Norway has withdrawn its sponsorship of L.37. Italy has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:
India.

Abstaining:
Benin, Bhutan.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.37 was adopted by 133 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

[Subsequently the delegation of Guinea informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Kambire (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I was distracted during the voting and would like Burkina Faso's vote to be recorded as in favour.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We shall proceed to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.38. Are there delegations who wish to explain their position before a decision is taken? There being none, I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.38, entitled "Regional disarmament", was introduced by the representative of Pakistan at the 18th meeting, on 28 October. The sponsors are listed in the document itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.38 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now take action on draft resolutions in cluster 6. I call upon those delegations wishing to make general statements on the set of draft resolutions contained in cluster 6.

Mr. Al-Albuge (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to speak on the draft resolution in document A/C.1/54/L.29, entitled "Verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification".

The international conventions in the field of disarmament and United Nations documentation — including the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification", document A/50/377 — show that verification is a process in which data are collected and then organized and analysed so as to reach a conclusion based on documented information on the compliance of a party with its obligations. United Nations documentation has confirmed also that effective verification could take place without affecting confidential national matters and that it is necessary to protect, in particular, the sensitive information and facilities of States. It is also important to steer away from any abuse in the field of verification so that it would not be used for other purposes.

However, the experience of the previous Special Commission in Iraq was in violation of all these concepts. The following are some examples of this.

First, the verification concept adopted by the previous Special Commission made it an issue totally different and separate from inspection. There were many exaggerations in the different aspects of verification. It was also used in an arbitrary fashion that was aimed at finding some relationship between the verification sources and the allegations of the Commission.

Secondly, the previous Special Commission used the verification process as a cover to implement its own policies in particular, and also the policies of one or two States that are known to be enemies of Iraq. The objective of that policy is to make the Special Commission a cover for continuing to impose sanctions on Iraq and continuing also the different false allegations for the ongoing aggression, as happened on 16 December 1998.

Thirdly, the United States has not denied the fact that the previous Special Commission inspectors who were American or British citizens carried out intelligence activities through exchanging visits and information among the American, British and Israeli intelligence services. It also implanted spying devices to monitor the movements of Iraqi officials and their communications.

The Secretary-General has not denied the accusations aimed at the previous Special Commission. During an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation on 27 June 1999 he said that the accusations of spying for the United States, directed at the inspectors of the Special Commission, were partially true. At the same time we did not find any denial by any American official of these accusations aimed at the Special Commission.

Fourthly, the investigations carried out by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in the Special Commission's laboratory in Baghdad revealed last July that the Commission's work in Iraq was not professional and that international procedures in the field of verification were not adopted. There was no documentation of the work carried out in the laboratory, and the log book of the laboratory was also destroyed. The Special Commission had brought into Iraq samples of DX and did not declare its presence. It became clear that the objective was to leave some traces on Iraqi missiles.

Briefly, the behaviour of the previous Special Commission was quite detrimental to the credibility of the international Organization and to disarmament efforts, including the concept of verification. The United Nations has to start an investigation into these practices and impose disciplinary measures on those who are accused of negligence. Unfortunately, neither the Secretary-General's report nor the draft resolution that we have before us has referred to these serious deviations from the work of the United Nations and the fact that it did not abide by these objectives, and there is now a need to correct any shortcomings.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): When I was making some general comments on draft resolutions in this cluster I said that the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.29 had been deferred. The Committee will not be voting on that draft resolution today. Does any other delegation wish to make a general statement on draft resolutions in cluster 6?

The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.13. Do any delegations wish to explain their position or vote before action is taken on L.13?

There being none, the Committee will now proceed. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.13, entitled "Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements", was introduced by the representative of the United States at the 16th meeting, on 26 October. The sponsors are listed in the draft resolution itself.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.13 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.13 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon the representative of the People's Republic of China to explain his position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China joined in the consensus on draft resolution L.13, on compliance with arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. Strict compliance with various disarmament agreements is of crucial importance to promoting disarmament and maintaining results in that field. For that reason China has always supported the draft resolution on this topic presented by the United States and other countries since 1985.

Today, this item is of even greater significance than ever before. However, regrettably, we have noted the approach that on the one hand advocates the significance of compliance with disarmament agreements while, on the other hand, taking a negative attitude towards draft resolution L.1, on preservation of and compliance with the ABM Treaty.

We hope that the main sponsor of this draft resolution will match its words with its deeds and effectively implement and comply with the legal obligations that it has undertaken, not to have double standards, not to jeopardize the interests of others in seeking its own interests, or take a utilitarian attitude towards the agreements, conventions and treaties in the field of disarmament and arms control. This would otherwise jeopardize the basis of the existing arms control and disarmament efforts and hinder the disarmament process. We hope that compliance with arms limitation, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements, including compliance with the ABM Treaty, will receive the unanimous support of all Member States of the United Nations next year.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.27. Does any delegation wish to explain its position or vote before a decision is taken? There being none, I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.27, entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures", was introduced by the representative of Germany at the 16th meeting, on 26 October. The sponsors are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2. In addition, Haiti has become a sponsor.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.27 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.27 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

There being none, the Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39. I call on those representatives who wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

Mr. Al-Hariri (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to explain its vote on draft resolution L.39, entitled "Transparency in armaments". My delegation fully supports the international trend towards the establishment of an international community free from the use of force or the threat of force, an international community in which the principles of justice, equality and peace prevail. We reaffirm our readiness to participate in any international attempt in good faith to achieve that objective.

Nevertheless, we wish to draw attention to the fact that this draft resolution does not take into account the special situation in the Middle East. In the Middle East the Arab-Israeli conflict continues to rage because of Israel's ongoing occupation of the Arab territories, in addition to its continuing refusal to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions. Also, Israel continues to acquire the most lethal, destructive and sophisticated weapons it is capable of manufacturing and stores them domestically. Therefore, transparency in the field of Israeli armaments applies only to a very small part of its huge military arsenal, particularly nuclear weapons. My delegation will therefore abstain in the vote on the draft resolution.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): In connection with draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39, entitled "Transparency in armaments", I wish to explain my delegation's vote.

Since the adoption of the General Assembly resolution 46/36 L in 1991, which established the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Egypt has faithfully advocated the principle of transparency in military matters. Egypt has been supportive of the objective underlying the establishment of the Register. From 1991 to 1993, Egypt lent its support to the annual General Assembly resolutions on transparency in armaments, which were adopted without a vote. However, Egypt has abstained in the vote since 1994, when the Group of Experts was unable to reach any agreement on related aspects of the further development of the Register.

For the Register to attain its objectives as a truly significant confidence-building measure, capable of eliminating suspicion and misperception and thereby contributing to enhancing security and stability, in our view it should be based on the following requirements. First, it should be a universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory confidence-building measure. Secondly, it should ensure equal rights and obligations for all States. Thirdly, it should address the legitimate security concerns of all States. And fourthly, it should provide the broadest degree of transparency in all fields of armaments in a non-selective manner.

The United Nations Register in its present form may meet the security concerns of certain States, but it does not adequately meet those of Egypt. Only an expanded Register that provides a comprehensive picture and covers in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner the overall military capabilities of States can serve the cause of transparency in armaments. Therefore, we cannot help but conclude that other countries do not share our enthusiasm and wish to limit the transparency exercise to certain categories of conventional arms, namely those which currently make up the Register. Such an approach is not consistent with agreements reached in 1991 in the General Assembly regarding the early expansion of the Register's scope. It is also discriminatory insofar as it requires those States which possess little more than the seven categories listed in the Register to report on virtually everything their armed forces own, while other States with more advanced military capabilities are not required to apply transparency to all the armaments and weapons systems in their possession, especially weapons of mass destruction.

Finally, we are emphasizing that we are unimpressed by the prospects of the possible eventual development of the Register in terms of expansion of its scope. Such prospects seem remote in view of the apparent lack of potential will by the international community to faithfully embrace the principles and objectives of transparency or apply them in a comprehensive, non-discriminatory and equitable manner.

For these reasons, my delegation will abstain on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation participates in the United Nations Register and is up to date as regards the information that must be provided in that respect.

Operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39

> "*Invites* the Conference on Disarmament to consider continuing its work undertaken in the field of transparency in armaments".

First, the Conference on Disarmament has not undertaken any work at all this year. Furthermore, it is the position of the Group of 21 of the Conference on Disarmament that the ad hoc committee on transparency that functioned some years ago completed its mandate. In subsequent years there has been a special coordinator who has consulted countries about the manner in which transparency in armaments in the Conference on Disarmament could be pursued, but no work has been undertaken. Paragraph 6 therefore does not reflect a reality, and my delegation will be abstaining on this vote.

Mr. Al-Ahmed (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to explain its position on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reiterates its full support for transparency in armaments as one of the measures that has contributed to strengthening international peace and security. My country believes that for any mechanism to succeed in achieving transparency it must be inspired by clear and basic principles, that is, it must be balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminatory. It must enhance national security as well as regional and international security for all States in accordance with international law.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a first attempt by the international community to deal with the question of transparency at a global level. Despite the fact that the possible value of the Register as a global confidence-building measure and as a mechanism for early warning is very clear, the Register has faced a number of notable problems, such as the fact that about half of the Members of the United Nations have consistently refrained from providing information to it. That makes it necessary for us to reiterate the need to take into account the fears and apprehensions of those States in an effective manner and in a manner that would ensure universal participation in the Register.

My country wishes to reaffirm the statement made in the reply from the States members of the League of Arab States to the United Nations Secretary-General regarding his report in document A/52/312 of 28 August 1997 on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. That reply made it clear that an expanded Register as provided for in the founding resolution 46/36 L — to contain information on conventional weapons as well as weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and on advanced technology with military applications — would constitute a more balanced and comprehensive and less discriminatory tool that would attract a much larger number of participants.

My country will therefore abstain in the vote on this draft resolution.

Mr. Babaa (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation will also abstain in the vote on the draft resolution before the Committee for the same reasons expressed by the representatives of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Of course we support transparency in armaments, but we are also aware that in our Arab region there is a hostile entity that is armed to the teeth, even with weapons of mass destruction, and is developing new, completely unknown weapons, as we read in the *Sunday Times*, genetic weapons that kill a certain ethnicity in a certain race. That is information we could not obtain from that Register.

Therefore, my delegation regrets that it will have to abstain.

Mr. Al-Ghanim (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution L.39, entitled "Transparency in armaments". The delegation of Kuwait deems it important to expand the scope of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms so as to include weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, my delegation seconds what was stated by the representatives of Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Libya and will abstain.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): As no other delegation wishes to explain its position, we will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39. A recorded vote has been requested. Separate votes have also been requested on operative paragraphs 4 (b) and 6.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39, entitled "Transparency in armaments", was introduced by the representative of the Netherlands at the 17th meeting, on 27 October. The sponsors are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2. In addition, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Cape Verde, El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Uzbekistan, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The Committee will now proceed to vote on operative paragraph 4(b) of draft resolution L.39.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Zambia.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Algeria, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kuwait, Mexico, Myanmar, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen.

Operative paragraph 4(b) was retained by 121 votes to none, with 12 abstentions.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now vote on operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution L.39. I call on the Secretary.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now take action on operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution L.39.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Zambia.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Algeria, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Myanmar, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen.

Operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39 was retained by 120 votes to none, with 15 abstentions.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39 as a whole. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on draft resolution L.39 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Zambia.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Algeria, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39 as a whole was adopted by 128 votes to none, with 13 abstentions.

[Subsequently the delegation of Guyana informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call now on those representatives who wish to explain their positions or votes.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to make a statement on the position of the Chinese delegation after the vote on this draft resolution. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a transparency measure among sovereign States concerning the legal transfer of arms. This has been specified by General Assembly resolution 46/36 L.

Regrettably, a certain country, in total disregard of the provisions of that resolution, in the four years since 1996 has registered its arms sales to the Taiwan province of the People's Republic of China with the United Nations by way of a footnote in the Register. Arms sales to Taiwan not only violate Chinese sovereignty but seriously interfere in the internal affairs of China. It is obviously not an arms transfer among sovereign States. To register arms sales to Taiwan in the United Nations Register has changed the special nature of the Register, namely the Register among and between sovereign States, and has politicized the Register. Therefore, China has been compelled to suspend its participation in the Register.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39 calls upon Member States to provide the Secretary-General the requested data and information for the Register. When a certain country has not redressed its erroneous behaviour, and when the seriousness of the Register has not been maintained, China obviously cannot provide the requested information for the Register.

In the meantime, concerning the repeated requests to the Secretary-General to set up a group of experts for the further development of the Register and the requests to the Conference on Disarmament to carry out its work in the field of transparency in armaments, the Chinese delegation still holds different opinions. In view of the above, the Chinese delegation abstained in the vote on draft resolution L.39.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Because of the positive balance emerging from draft resolution L.39, we voted in favour of it once again. However, despite our favourable attitude to the text as a whole, we would once again like our reservations on paragraph 6 to be recorded.

As in the past, Cuba abstained when there was a vote on the paragraphs because we consider that the Conference on Disarmament has already completed its work on transparency. The decision to continue or not with consideration of this topic in the Conference is a decision to be made only by the Conference itself, taking into consideration the priorities established by the General Assembly in this field. That is why my delegation reserves the right, as appropriate, to reserve its position on this matter in the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Shein (Myanmar): I should like to explain the position of my delegation on the draft resolution on transparency in armaments contained in document A/C.1/54/L.39. Myanmar believes that transparency in armaments can be a useful confidence-building measure provided that it is universal, non-discriminatory and on a voluntary basis. However, my delegation has difficulties with the main thrust and certain elements of draft resolution L.39. In particular, my delegation has reservations on paragraph 4 (*b*) and paragraph 6.

In paragraph 4 (*b*) the General Assembly calls for the convening of a meeting of a group of governmental experts in 2000 and calls upon the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development. We believe that it is still premature and unnecessary at this juncture to further develop the Register. In view of the past track record of the group of governmental experts, we also have misgivings about the effectiveness and usefulness of holding another meeting of a group of governmental experts on this subject.

Moreover, my delegation does not see any urgent need for the Conference on Disarmament to take up the issue of transparency in armaments, as called for in paragraph 6, especially at a time when the Conference ought to be concentrating on banning fissile material, nuclear disarmament and other important issues. For that reason my delegation abstained in the voting on paragraphs 4 (*b*) and 6, and on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Algeria has always defended the principle of transparency in armaments, a principle which it believes to be part of security- and confidence-building measures among States. The United Nations Register as it exists meets some of our concerns, but not in a totally satisfactory manner. It is necessary and urgent to increase the scope of the Register to other arms for it to be universal and non-discriminatory.

Our difficulties with paragraph 6, which invites the Conference on Disarmament to continue consideration of this issue, are known. We believe that this body has already considered this question. For all these reasons the delegation of Algeria abstained in the voting on operative paragraphs 4(*b*) and 6 and on the draft resolution as a whole.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The Committee will now take action on draft resolutions in cluster 7.

I will now call upon those delegations wishing to make general statements on the draft resolutions — not on specific texts, but on the group of draft resolutions contained in this final cluster.

There being none, the Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.3. Would any delegation like to explain its position or vote before a decision is taken on L.3?

Mr. Al-Ahmed (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to join the list of sponsors of draft resolution L.3.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Does any other delegation wish to speak? There being none, the Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.3. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.3, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission", was introduced by the representative of Mexico at the 15th meeting, on 21 October. The sponsors — namely extended Bureau members only, as is the practice and tradition — are listed in the document.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution L.3 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.3 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted. I see none.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.10. Does any delegation wish to explain its position or vote before action is taken? There being none, I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.10, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa", was introduced by the representative of Burkina Faso, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, at the 19th meeting, on 29 October.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution L.10 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.10 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

There appear to be none, so the Committee will now proceed to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.14. Does any delegation wish to explain its position or vote before a decision is taken on the draft resolution?

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Bangladesh wishes to withdraw its sponsorship of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.14. Let me explain. As all are aware, Bangladesh has ardently and consistently supported the thrust of this draft resolution and has always wished to see the key aspects of past agreements implemented. This would also intend to shift the activities of the Centre from New York to Kathmandu. It is our view, however, that the present language does not adequately reflect our sentiments forcefully enough. To that end we made more proposals. Bangladesh will vote for the draft resolution, but as the language stands at present we are no longer in a position to sponsor it.

Mr. Douangphoungla (Lao People's Democratic Republic): My delegation would like to join in sponsoring draft resolution L.14.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.14, entitled, "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific", was introduced by the representative of Nepal at the 18th meeting, on 28 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF.2. In this connection the representative of Bangladesh has just announced that Bangladesh has withdrawn as a sponsor. The following countries have also become sponsors: the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Uzbekistan.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.14 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.14 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Al-Hinaai (Oman): Let me briefly state the following on behalf of my delegation regarding draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.14, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific".

Oman supports the draft resolution entirely, and we have been doing so in the past. We are happy to see it receiving the widest consensus in this Committee. However, we think the Centre's actual and current functions should have a broader scope. We hope also that it will have greater coordination with the Member States it aims to serve and represent.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): There being no other delegations wishing to explain their positions, we will now proceed to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.16.

Does any delegation wish to explain its position or vote before a decision is taken? There appear to be none. I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.16, entitled "Report of the Conference on Disarmament", was introduced by the representative of Australia at the 17th meeting, on 27 October. Jamaica has joined the sponsors.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution L.16 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.16 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Does any delegation wish to explain its position on the draft resolution just adopted? There appear to be none.

The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.49. Does any delegation wish to explain its position or vote before a decision is taken? I call on the Secretary.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.49, entitled "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament", was introduced by the representative of South Africa on behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, at the 17th meeting, on 27 October.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution L.49 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.49 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on those representatives who wish to explain their position on the draft resolution just adopted. There being none, the Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.51.

I shall now call on any delegation that wishes to explain its position or vote before a decision is taken. There being none, I call on the Secretary.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.51, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean", was introduced by the representative of Peru on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States at the 19th meeting, on 29 October.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The sponsors of draft resolution L.51 have expressed the wish that it be adopted without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.51 was adopted.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their positions on the draft resolution just adopted. I see none.

We have concluded today's consideration of the draft resolutions before the Committee. Shortly members will receive another informal paper listing the draft resolutions to be examined tomorrow.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): For tomorrow morning a list of draft resolutions for action tomorrow morning is being distributed, but I will read it out: cluster 8, draft resolutions A/C.1/54/L.4, L.32, L.45, L.46 and L.47; cluster 9, draft resolution L.20; and cluster 10, draft resolutions L.15 and L.30.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I think the members of the Committee now have a fairly comprehensive idea of what we will be doing tomorrow. I should like to remind members that we will be meeting tomorrow at 10.30 a.m. sharp.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.